Ink Drawing

Prepared exclusively for students of

ART INSTRUCTION SCHOOLS

CONTRIBUTORS

Charles Allen
Mary Lynn Baker
John Berkey
Kenneth Carlson
Dayton's, Minneapolis
General Mills
Charles Dana Gibson
Tom Healy
George Hughes
Don Jardine
George Karn, Jr.
John Kemper
Heinrich Kley
Minneapolis Institute of Arts
Modern Medicine
Charles Murphy
Austra Ogulis
Frieda Rich
Earl Seibel
John Sturnick
Top-Value Enterprises
Paul Van Demark

When you thumb through your favorite magazines and newspapers, you can't help noticing that a high percentage of the art work found there is finished in ink. The rough layout or the preliminary sketch may well have been done in pencil but the final work is most often done in ink.

In the field of newspaper and magazine art, ink drawing is considered "the bread and butter medium." The reason is the simple economic fact that ink art is much less expensive to reproduce than pencil, wash, and other types of art involving tones of gray.

All ink drawings, even those that include fine lines for shading, are basically alike because they involve the same consistent black line against a light, usually white, background. The printing process used to reproduce this kind of art, therefore, is no more complex or expensive than that used on a page of black type.

In this lesson you will be introduced to the general concept of the drawing and will become familiar with ink brushes and various ink drawing pens. You will also study the felt tip pen and the scratch board knife, and there is a special section on lettering which will be very helpful to you in your early commercial art career.

As you progress and gain confidence with ink, you will find that the same bold simplicity which makes ink so practical for many commercial artists is also very rewarding in fine art work.

Ink Drawing

Pencil studies launched you on your art career and now with the study of ink you will be cruising "under full sail". Pen and ink and brush and ink play an important part in today's art world, just as they have in the past. The first historical records of ink being used by artists come to us from Egypt and China. Ink was developed by these ancient peoples in about 2500 B.C.

In the 5000 years that man has used ink, ink techniques have undergone a number of changes. It is interesting to note that while ink applications have changed a great deal since the early Chinese and the Egyptians, the ink itself has remained much the same. In fact, the modern India Ink (drawing ink) is made of the same type of ingredients that were combined those many centuries ago. Both the Chinese and the Egyptians had the same type of ink, but they used two entirely different methods of applying it. The Egyptians became very expert at brush and ink methods of rendering, but the Chinese preferred to allow their ink to harden into "sticks", then they wet them and drew with bamboo. Eventually, however, the Chinese also adopted the brush and even today some of their early pictures are hailed as masterpieces of brush work.

Long before the invention of the printing press, all written material was carefully hand-lettered with ink and the feather quill (forerunner of the modern pen point). The monks in England in the 7th and 8th centuries brought hand printing to a high level. They not only mastered lettering, but they also did delicate and artistic "illuminations". At first these were elaborate letters usually at the beginning of paragraphs. These illuminations rapidly became more and more complicated, and the monks began to use colored inks and often used whole pages to develop these "illustrations".

The painstaking art of hand lettering rapidly diminished after Gutenberg invented the printing press with movable type (1400's). Because of the greater number of books that could be "published", ink became more important than ever. The artist of the period quickly developed new techniques of ink drawing that were suitable for reproduction in books. The artist would often make quill and ink drawings that were then turned into wood engravings (pictures "drawn" or carved on the smooth end grain of wood). These wood engravings were then "locked" into the printing presses and many prints could be made that appeared similar to the original ink art.

In the life of the student and professional artist, ink is still as important today as it was in the early days of the Chinese and Egyptians. In fact, it's difficult to think of any artist today who doesn't use ink in some phase of his work. Cartoonists, after planning their compositions in pencil, use ink for the final renderings. Some do most of this work with a pen, some prefer to use a brush. Many cartoonists use both pen and brush. Illustrators also make good use of ink techniques. Today, these men have added new excitement to their work by combining ink with other mediums such as wash, pencil, and even oil paints. Newspaper "spot" illustrations and drawings for older juvenile books are also done primarily in ink. For the art director and advertising man colored inks and felt tip pens have become necessary tools. Even the fine art painters use ink to make many of their sketches. These sketches are often used later as reference material for paintings; however, many are also matted and framed for exhibition in galleries.

Chinese ink drawing, Ming Dynasty, owned by The Minneapolis Institute of Arts.

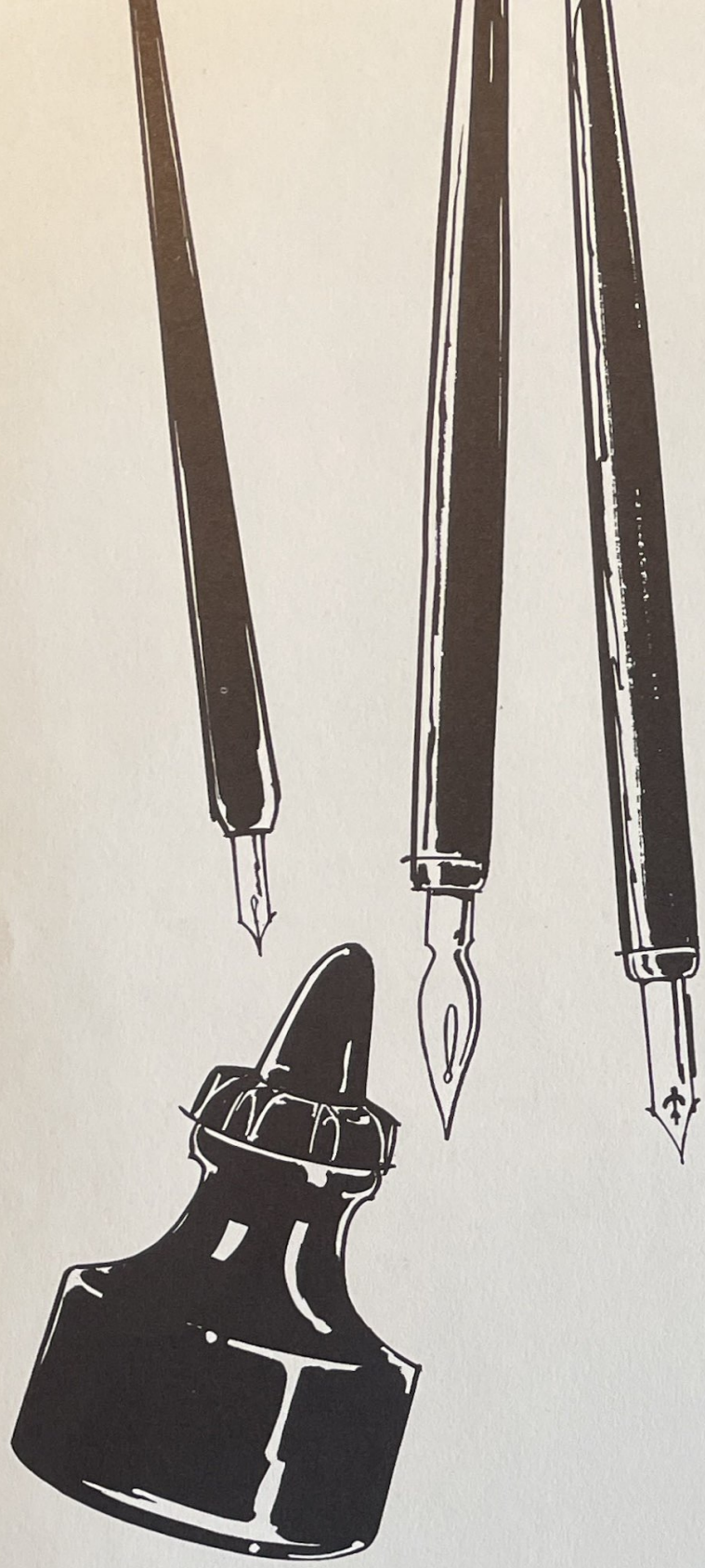
Much of the experience and knowledge that you have acquired from your pencil section can be carried over and applied to your experiments with ink drawing. Although pencils are different from pens and brushes, they are also alike in many ways. You will see that this is true, especially when using the pen. A pen can be held just like a pencil. Also, many pen drawings resemble work done in the fine point style of pencil rendering. Just as you choose different grades of lead to get contrast in pencil drawings, you can pick various pen points to give greater range to an ink drawing. Some pen nibs (points) are fine and delicate, making it possible to do a precise detailed type of picture. Other nibs are coarser and lend themselves to bolder drawing.

Using the brush is going to be quite a change from doing pencil drawings. However, even here you will find the tools have many of the same qualities. A picture done with brush and ink is comparable to a Broad Point pencil drawing because it makes use of thick and thin lines and also large bold areas of tone. In pencil, you'll remember, these tones ranged from light gray to deep black. This is not possible to do with ink because ink is always pure black. Gray areas must be shown by Dry Brush and Split Hair development . . . special brush techniques that will be explained on the following pages. So, you're taking another step, but one that shouldn't be too difficult. Your training in pencil methods will prove very helpful as you explore the field of ink drawing.

At first you may feel a little timid working in ink because of making an error that can't be easily corrected. It's true that changing mistakes in ink is not as simple as in pencil, but in time you will come to appreciate this discipline. Knowing that you must get it right "the first time" will teach you to work in a more professional manner. This greater determination will produce better drawings, faster. This will bring praise from friends and relatives and will get you closer to the day you start selling. And, drawings done in pen and brush will probably be the first type you will be marketing. Almost all agencies and studios start their new artists out by doing this type of work, and wise job hunters, knowing this, pack their portfolios with ink drawings. If you can master the skills of good drawing and crisp ink rendering, you will never need to worry about being without work. But, we are getting ahead of ourselves. Let's save job hunting problems for another day and get on with ink drawing!

Pen and ink drawing by Charles Dana Gibson.

From The Drawings of Henrich Kley, published by Dover Publications, New York 14, N.Y.



Pen and Ink

Pen points have improved a great deal since the monks first worked with "quills", but the time honored techniques of pen and ink are still as popular as ever. As a matter of fact, the demand for good pen and ink drawings continues to grow in commercial art. Because artists can get fine, crisp lines with a pen, the art work is not only effective but also easily reproduced.

And with a little practice you will also find that YOUR pen and ink drawings can be very successful and interesting. For with a well placed line you will be able to indicate solidity and shape, texture and contrast. The variety and contrasts you will be able to create are almost unlimited – and incidentally, so are the commercial art opportunities for good pen artists in cartooning, illustrating, advertising and fashion.

Ink

Many manufacturers put out good quality inks for drawing. Each ink has a slightly different character. As you can guess, professional artists do not agree on which is the best. It becomes a personal choice based on personal experience. Art Instruction Schools has called on the advice of these pros to pick a good ink for your use. You'll like it – it has the two basic elements that every artist wants in a "drawing ink". This ink is waterproof and it is BLACK.

A good black drawing ink should really be BLACK. A blue or gray tint means the ink hasn't enough body.

Get into the habit of using waterproof ink because it will not smear when a wash is flowed over it. For now, you will not combine wash and ink, but that day is not too far away.

The best of inks will get too thick if they are left sitting without a cover. Even then a few drops of water will usually put the sickest ink back into working condition.

Pen Points

There are many, many types of pens and pen points for you to choose from. So many, in fact, that it is hard to know which is best to start with. No one person can really say which is the one to use because each pen has good and bad features. Each person develops special likes and dislikes. And, you may want to do some experimenting to find the one that feels best to you. Here are some of the best known members of the pen family.

Two new members of the pen clan are the Felt Pen and the special "Fountain Type" drawing pen. In the felt tip pen, the nibs (points) are actually made of felt material. Drawings done with this pen often have thick soft lines resembling brush work. The new fountain type pens are filled like an ordinary writing fountain pen by dipping the nib in a bottle of ink and squeezing the rubber cartridge in the handle. However, these new pens are specially made because a regular fountain pen would be ruined if filled with thick India drawing ink.

You have probably heard of Crow Quill pens, the name given to the smallest members of the pen family. The biggest pens, used for lettering, are called Chisel Points and Ball Points (not to be confused with the common ball-point writing pen). Between the very large and the very small are many medium size nibs all with slight variations. For your first adventures in pen and ink we want you to use the pens supplied in your student outfit. For a hint of what your points will do compare their sizes – just by looking you can get an idea of the type line each will make. The broader pen nibs make coarse lines and are used for bold work. The finer pens make more delicate lines and are best for fine line drawings. The pens supplied will enable you to do all the different styles of drawing shown in this section of your text book. Remember, it isn't how many pens you have but how well you learn to use them!

Pen Holders

Picking pen holders is not as difficult as choosing pen points. Holders all work in much the same way though they may have different shapes and colors. Also, the "grips" are often made of different materials. Leather, rubber and cork are the most common. When you go shopping for a pen holder there are two main things to watch for: first, will it fit into the bottle of ink; and second, is it comfortable to hold? The first idea may sound silly, but it isn't funny to get all set for work and find you can't get any ink! Many artists prefer to use pen holders without grips because the grips have a tendency to get ink on them and to stain the hands. A plain holder is easier to clean and keep clean.

You may be wondering how many holders you need to get started. The answer of course depends on you. While you can "get by" with only one holder, it is a good idea to have two. You will

soon be using more than one pen point on a single drawing, and it is time consuming and messy to change nibs in the middle of your work.

Pen Care

As every professional knows, if you take good care of your pens, they will work better for you. Your first job then is to give your pen points a bath! This washing will cut the fine coat of oil that often clings to a factory-new nib. You probably can't see this oil, but if you don't clean it off, the ink will flow unevenly and you'll get ragged looking lines. To clean the pen points start by working up a lather on your hands and then rub the nibs with your soapy fingers. Since wet nibs are very slippery, put a stopper in the sink or washbowl so you don't lose one down the drain.

After rinsing the soap off, dry the pen points with a piece of lint-free cloth.

When you're out of doors, without soap or water, you can try this to get a new point started. Carefully put the nib in your mouth and suck it. The saliva in your mouth will work like the soap, destroying any little oil that might be on the nib. Another good method of "breaking in" a pen is to hold a flame to the pen nib. Just a second or two in the flame of a match will be enough to burn away the oil.

When you are through using your pens for the day, clean them again by wiping them on a rag before the ink dries. No pen will work if it is coated with dead ink. If however you do get careless, and let ink get caked on your pens, there are several ways to get them back in tip-top shape. Many ink manufacturers have cleaning fluids just for this job. Ordinary ammonia will also work. Another soap and water bath, with an old toothbrush for scrubbing, will do the trick too. Or try sandpaper, a knife or a razor blade for scraping the pen nib clean. Find the method that works best for you. But more important, don't let your pens get into this condition. Keep them clean!

Opaque White

Opaque White is very good for making corrections but to be useful it must be kept in good working order; the paint should be about the thickness of cream. At this consistency it flows easily and still has enough body to cover well. If your paint gets too thick, just add several drops of water and stir. If you add too much water, and the paint gets thin, you can pour the extra water off. Letting the jar sit uncovered over-night will also help. The air hitting the paint will form a crust which will add the desired thickness when mixed into the rest of the jar.

If your opaque sits uncovered, or if you don't get the jar lid screwed on tightly, the paint may dry up as hard as a rock. This condition can be remedied by filling the jar to the brim with water and letting it remain uncovered a day or two. During this time, you should "poke" at it with a palette knife or table knife to make holes for the water to sink into. Eventually you'll be able to break the paint into small lumps and stir it back into workable order.

Making Corrections

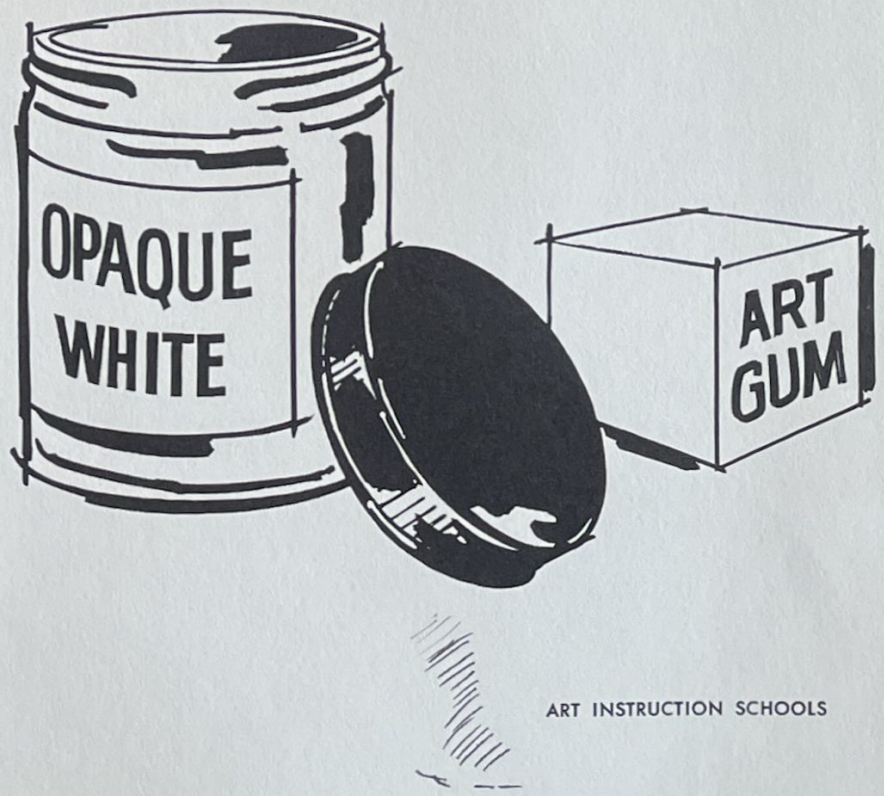
Correcting mistakes on ink drawings presents some real problems. In pencil drawing, you can easily erase; in oil painting, you can quickly paint over an unsuccessful area. But, there is no quick and easy way to make changes when you draw with ink. Some artists prefer to start over if the error is serious, yet this isn't always possible if you're short on materials or rushing to meet a deadline. There are times when you just have to "patch it up" as best you can.

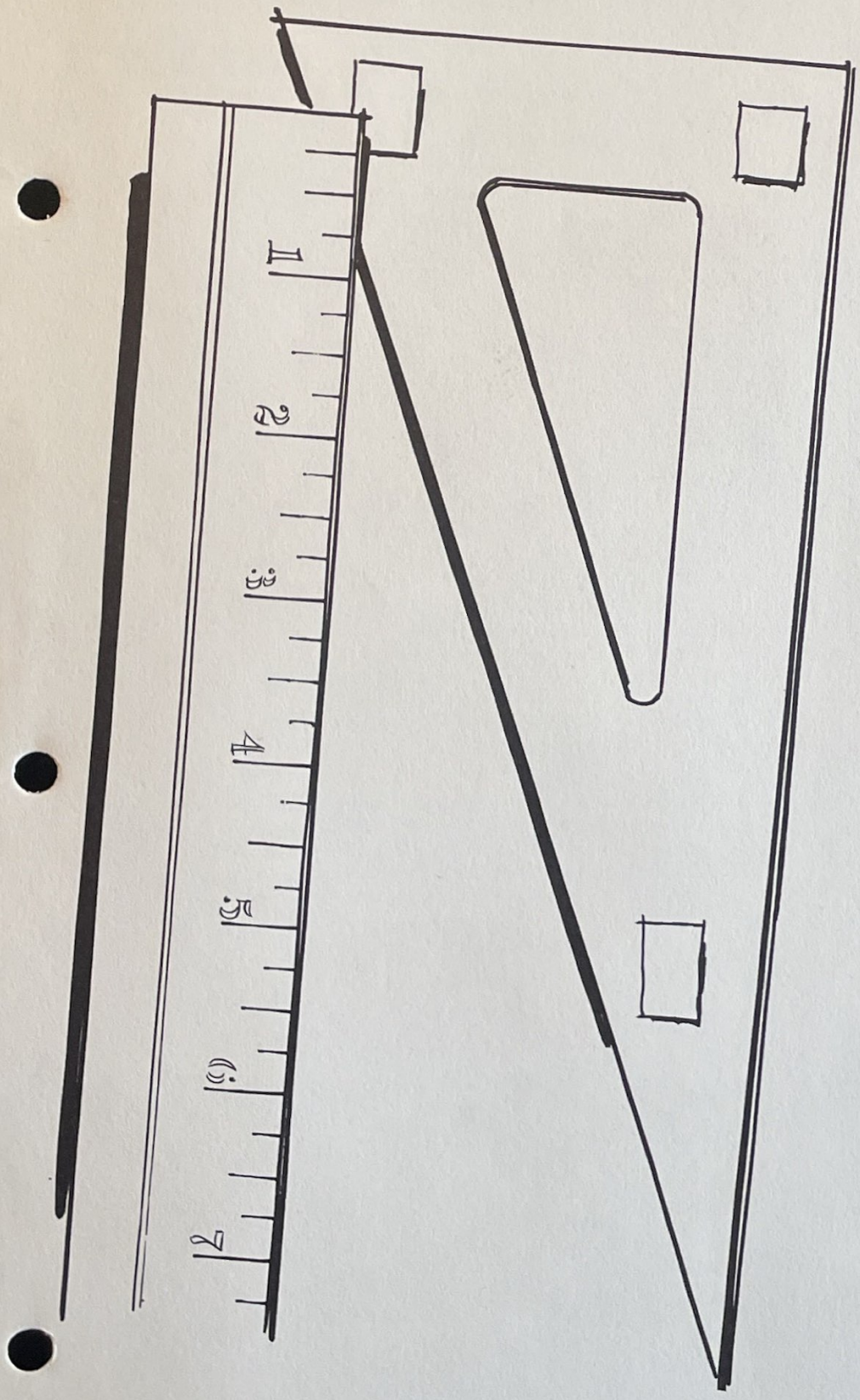
When a drawing is going to be photographed for reproduction you can actually use a patch! Many times commercial artists redraw a poor area on a separate sheet of paper and then paste this correction on the original art work. Patches do not, however, look good, and this method of correcting should be limited to art for reproduction.

You will find opaque white paint, razor blades, X-Acto knives or erasers most effective for correcting an ink drawing. There are places where the error can be covered easily with white paint, and then, there are other places where nothing will do but to scrape the error away with a knife. Scratching and scraping with an X-Acto knife or razor blade often leaves a rough surface on the paper which makes redrawing difficult. To some degree, rubbing this area with a thumbnail or a clean blunt instrument, like the handle of a table knife, will smooth the paper down. Scorching the area with a lighted match before beginning to scrape also makes the paper harder and gives a smoother surface.

Opaque white is helpful to paint out an ink blot or a few stray lines. Wiggly lines, or ones that get too thick can also be trimmed or thinned. Finger tracks and smears, too, will disappear under opaque paint. Paint, however, doesn't make a good surface for redrawing because ink will spread when it hits the glossy surface of the paint. Also, pen nibs dig into layers of paint, get clogged and refuse to work! But no matter how carefully you work, you are going to make mistakes once in a while. This can't be helped and you shouldn't feel too bad if you spoil a drawing or two. Making mistakes is part of learning. You have to know what *not* to do, as as well as what *to* do. Every artist has a collection of failures and mistakes along with his list of successes. The main difference between the professional and the student is that the pro has learned by experience how to avoid and how to correct these errors.

Don't overlook your erasers. They too can be useful in correcting ink mistakes. The hard rubber erasers (like typists use) are effective for removing ink lines, while the soft rubber or kneaded erasers are best for general clean up: finger marks and pencil guide lines. While you're erasing, be careful of these two points: first, be sure your ink is perfectly dry; and second, be sure that your eraser is clean. A beautiful piece of art can be ruined if you start erasing too soon and smear "half dried" ink across the page — always let your drawing sit for at least half an hour before doing any erasing. Then, too, a dirty eraser must never be used or you will end up with a bigger "mess" than you started to clean up! Erasers get dirty from use and must be turned often to keep a clean edge to the paper.





Ruler and Triangle

There may be times in pen and ink rendering when you will want lines that are very precise and absolutely straight. Doing this "free hand" is difficult, and you can get much better results if you use your ruler or triangle to guide each stroke. Your ruler is made especially so that it can be used for ink drawing as well as for cutting straight lines with a knife or razor blade. Look closely and you'll see there is a metal strip running along both "ruling edges" of your ruler. These strips keep a knife or ruler from cutting into the wood, and consequently, preserve the ruler's straight edges. Because the strips "stick out" about an eighth of an inch, it is the metal strips that you use for ruling. And since they don't touch the paper when you are working, they aren't as likely to smear wet ink when you lift the ruler off your drawing.

To "fix" your triangle so it too can be used to make ink lines, just tape small squares of cardboard under each corner. By adding the cardboard scraps you "lift" the triangle off your drawing paper and keep the ink from "bleeding" and smearing. A thin cardboard from a shoe box or the backing from a scratch tablet will work fine. Taping pennies to a triangle also works; however, the coins may scratch or mark your paper.

Paper for Ink Drawing

Some of the same principles used in choosing paper for pencil drawing can again be applied when selecting the correct surface for your ink work. Some ink drawings, just like Broad Point pencil drawings are more impressive on rough surfaced paper. But smooth paper is usually better for pen work, just as it is for Fine Line style. The small, sharp point of the pen will glide smoothly on a bump-free paper. If, however, the paper has too much tooth, the point will get snagged. In pen drawings this produces splatters and blots. Another paper that is usually not advisable for pen and ink is one that is soft and absorbent, like newsprint or blotter paper. Here the ink soaks into the paper making fuzzy, blurred lines. There may be times when you will want this special effect, but for most pen work smooth paper is desirable.

Plate bristol, also called bristol board, has a very good surface for pen and ink drawing. When buying bristol, you have a choice of weights (thicknesses) which are indicated by the term "ply". A six-ply paper is heavier than a four-ply paper. The paper always gets heavier as the grading number gets larger. Many artists like to work on two-ply, although others prefer the extra weight of three-ply. In choosing the weight, remember to get paper heavy enough so it won't buckle when it gets wet with ink. Buckling or sagging paper is very difficult if not impossible to work on.

You might also like to try kid bristol. The term "kid" means that this paper has more tooth, a little rougher finish. On this paper your pen lines may not be as clean, but they will take on a different, interesting character. In buying paper you will know the surface is medium rough if you hear the term "cold press" used. Hot press paper is smooth. For paper with extremely textured surface, for special effects, you might even try some water color stock.

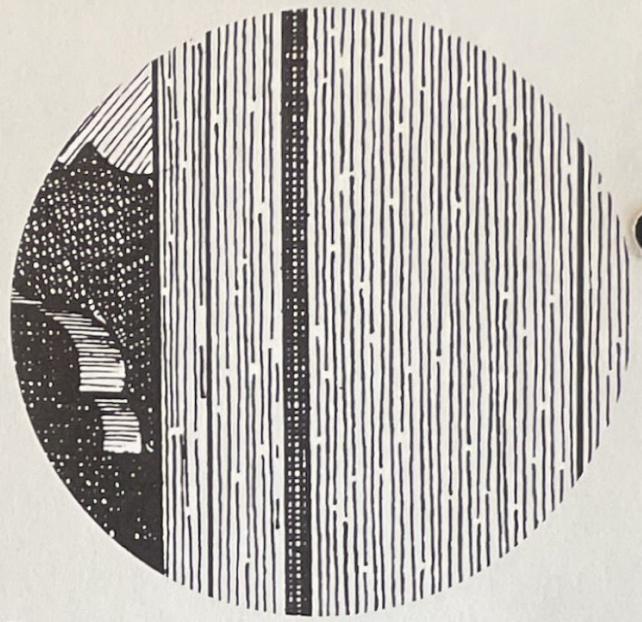
The best way to learn about papers is to experiment with a large variety of different types of paper to see the interesting results you can get. Many of the interesting effects than pen and ink drawings have are results of using different papers. So don't be afraid to experiment – originality pays off in the end!

The Value of Pen Strokes

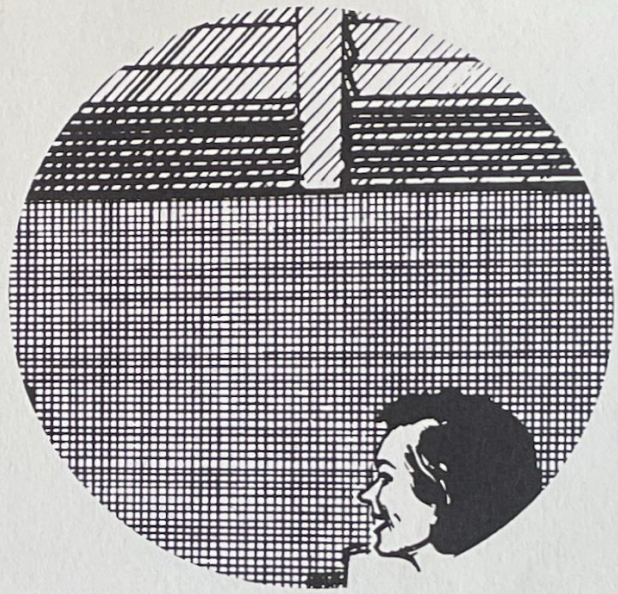
Pen and ink drawing will never go out of style! An artist trained to do this type of work is always popular and always in demand. A picture like the one on these pages will be admired for its fine craftsmanship as much ten years from now as it is today. Regardless of the trends in the art field, good ink drawings are always highly prized.

To have your work in this winners' category, of course, you must draw well. It means also that the finishing, the shading or rendering, must also show a good variety of textures and details. Professional work meets this requirement but the work of beginning artists is usually less pleasing because they have not yet mastered an interesting collection of strokes. In the student artists' renderings, all the lines may run in the same direction or there will be too much or too little cross-hatching.

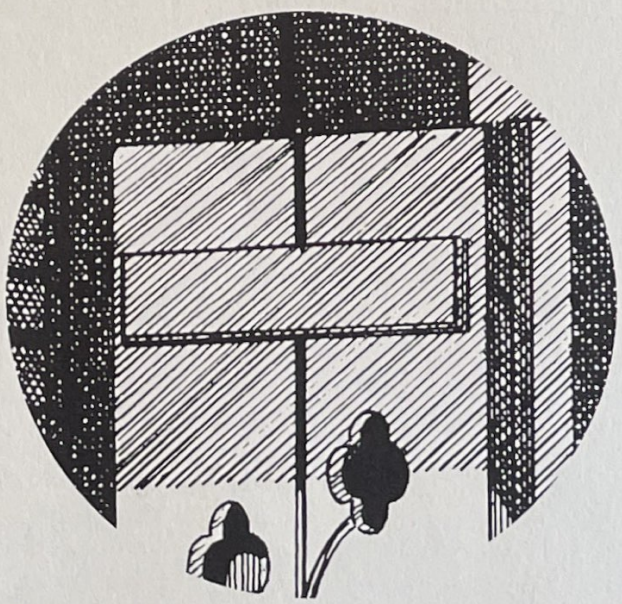
Keeping in mind that a variety of pen (or brush) strokes is important to make a good ink drawing, study the range of strokes on this illustration. The artist, by combining and overlapping lines, was able to show grass, leaves, wood, clothes and brick textures. The structure of the objects, as well as the illusion of space and depth, was also done by varying the line combinations. This illustration has a pleasing arrangement of light and dark patterns too. One might say that it is like a jig-saw puzzle, that is, just a collection of lines put together in the right combinations. Of course you know it isn't quite that simple, and yet it is helpful to remember that the pen textures you will be practicing are the same ones this artist used. And, in time, you will be fitting all of these textures and details into a picture that will be as fine as this one.



The wall on the far right of the picture shows a set of interesting lines that look like the dots and dashes of a Morse Code message. They were rendered "free hand," that is, without the aid of a ruler or other mechanical guide. There is no set rule as to the placement or length of these broken lines. The artist was only concerned with making an interesting texture.

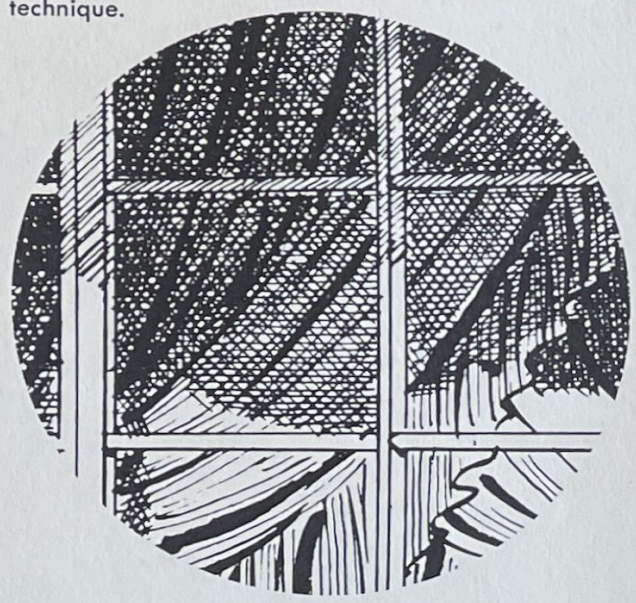


On this area we see a pattern that has a very mechanical look. This is the result of using a ruler to keep the lines as straight as possible. Note that the vertical and horizontal lines cross each other making hundreds of small squares. This technique is known as crosshatch.



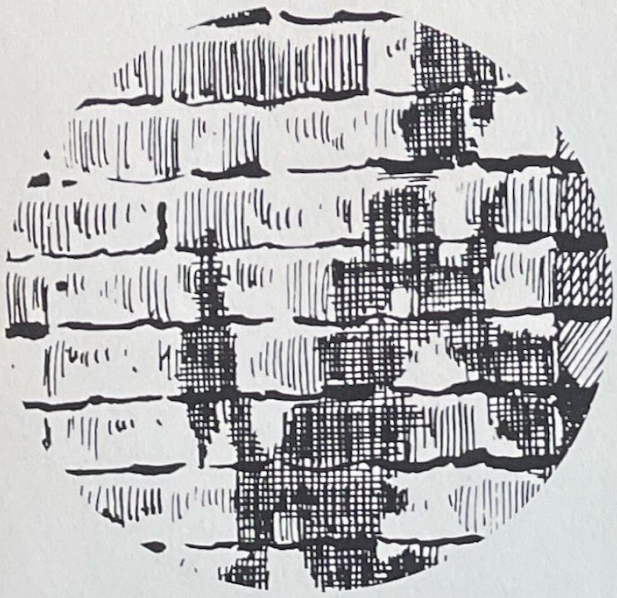
The clean lines on the shutters run in a diagonal (slanting) direction. They do not touch, but are evenly spaced, parallel strokes. This is a good texture to practice when learning pen control. Remember, you will get the best results if you start your strokes at the top of an area and work down. This way you won't smear any lines that are still wet.

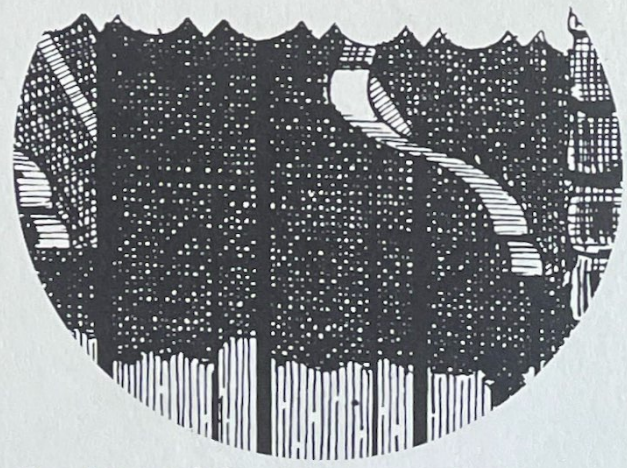
Number four has a crosshatch pattern similar to the interior wall. However, on these drapes, the strokes come from two slanting directions. The result is that the lines make little diamond shapes, somewhat different than the squares made by the other crosshatch technique.



Courtesy Top Value Enterprises, Inc. and Campbell-Mithun, Inc. Advertising Agency.

On the bricks an entirely new style is used to add another interesting set of details. These strokes run parallel, side by side, and are done in a loose, free hand style. The white of the paper also plays an important part in this rendering as does the pattern produced by the shadows from the tree leaves.





Lines in several directions were used on the cross-hatch sections under the windows. This results in a strong dark tone that is almost black — almost — because there are still flecks of white paper showing to give the area interest and "sparkle."

Drawing by Austra Ogulis.

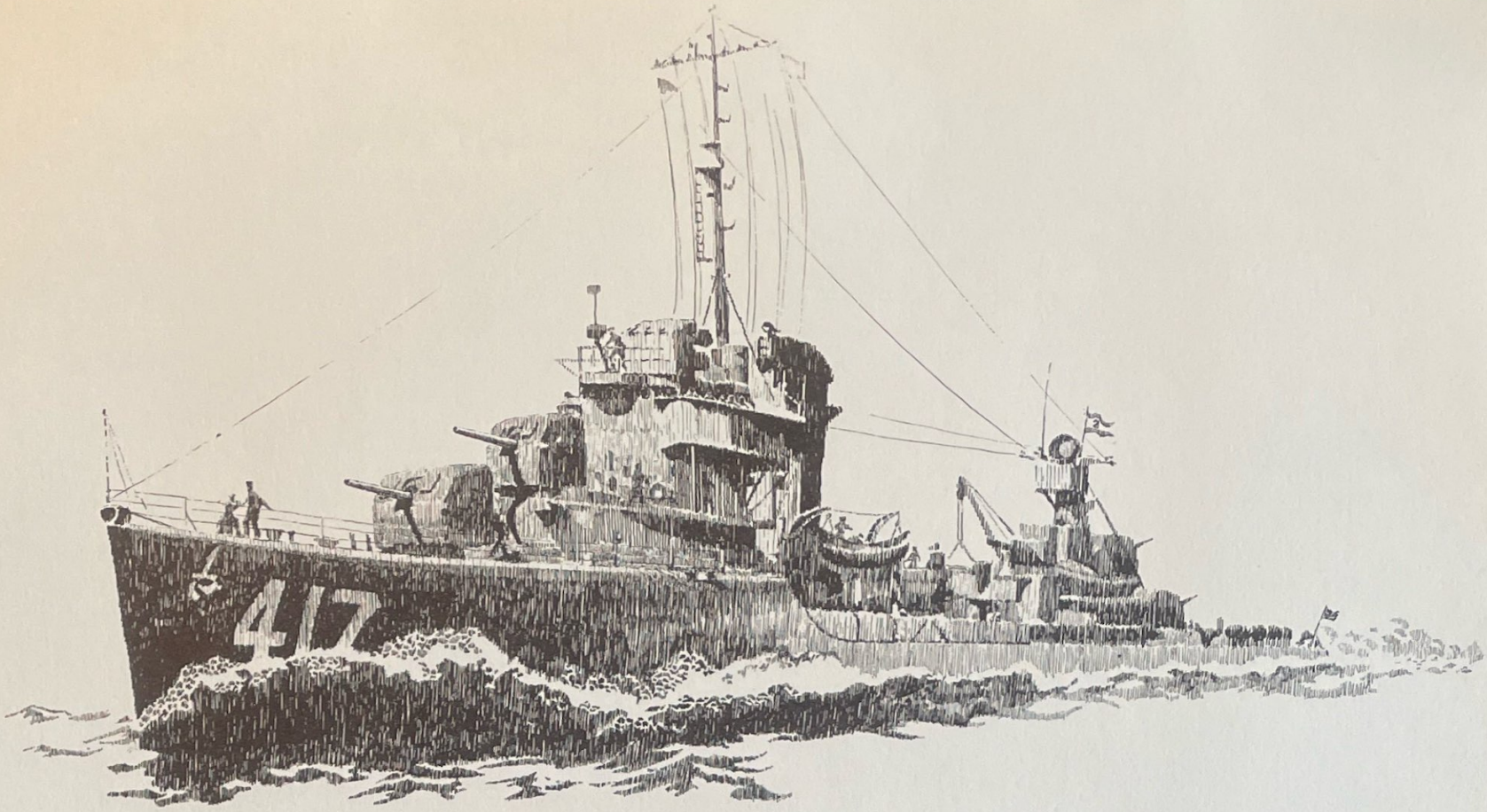
Austra Ogulis, one of your instructors, recently took a trip through Egypt. Thanks to the slow speed of the river steamer, she was able to make this quick pen sketch while going to Aswan on the Nile River. Note the contrast in light and dark areas and the variety of thickness in the pen strokes.

Earl Seibel, one of Art Instruction Schools' promising students, shows the beautiful effects that can be achieved with a simple pen and ink technique (below). The texture on the animals is detailed, but because he left the background out the total effect is simple. The rings in the water are all that is needed to suggest a background.

The decorative pen and ink illustration below was done by Mary Lynn Baker, a student of Art Instruction Schools. Although Miss Baker has used lines of the same thickness, she has created variety and movement with her imaginative, flowing technique. Notice how well fine line work seems to emphasize the regal elegance of this seated figure.

Drawing by Earl Seibel.

Art by Mary Lynn Baker.

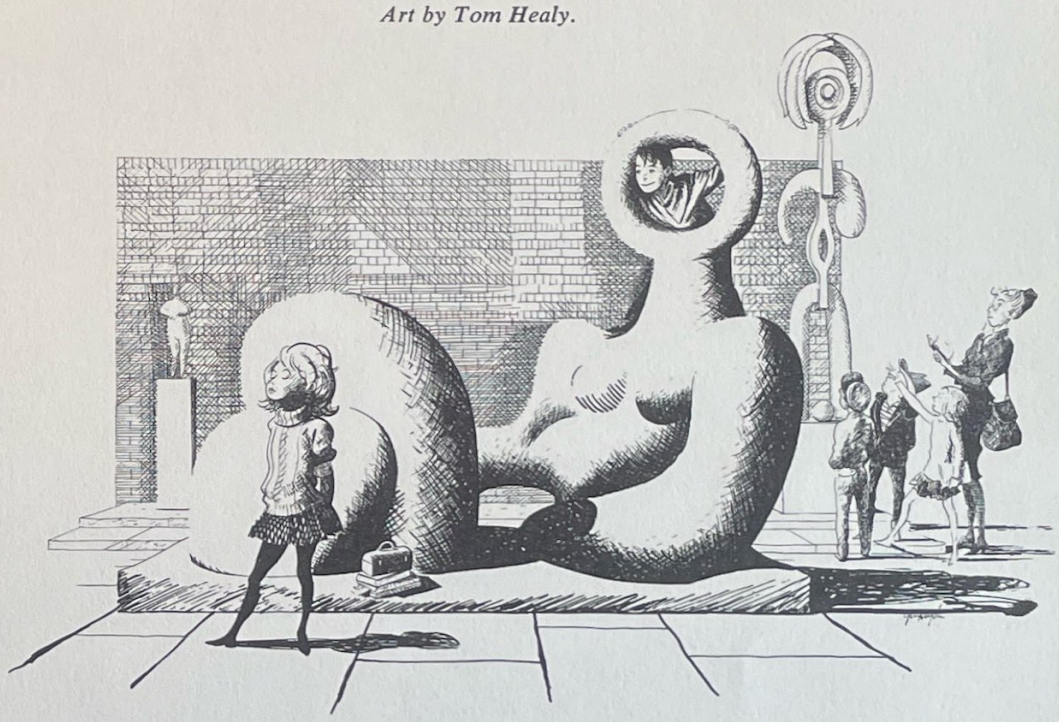


Art by Tom Healy.

In the illustration above, Tom Healy, Art Instruction Schools' student, has succeeded in creating this illustration using almost all vertical lines. His interesting technique not only gives the illustration consistency, but also gives a feeling of mist and moisture so necessary to his art. This fine ink drawing was done with pen and is typical of the excellent results that can be obtained with serious study and continuous practice.

The illustration on the right, by George Hughes, shows some effects that you can get with pen and ink. Mr. Hughes rendered this piece of art with a variety of line widths and with a good arrangement of solid shadow areas to create dramatic lighting and interest.

The illustration below captures the light, airy quality of summer fun and music. The artist has created the marching figures with pen and ink, and has thinned a little ink with water for a "brushed-on" wash. This wash, or thin ink solution, helps to give depth and interest to the fine drawing.



Ink work by George Hughes.

Courtesy of Dayton's, Minneapolis, Minn.

Ink Drawing Lesson No. 1

The three examples of art on this page show the different ways you can handle the same subject with pen and ink. For instance, one is done with a heavy outline, one has a varying outline and the other has a firm, though fine outline.

We have provided you with eight outline drawings of this illustration for practice. Use any combination of effects you see on this page, or, you can develop any new ones you like — let your imagination be your guide.

After you have done the eight renderings, select the one that you think is the most successful and re-do it on the lesson assignment page. We have supplied you with two of these assignment pages in case you make a mistake. When you have finished this lesson assignment, go on to the rest of the Ink lesson.

Do NOT send this drawing to the school until you have completed Lesson No. 2 and the test. Then, send both assignments and your test to the school.

Art by George Karn, Jr.

INK DRAWING LESSON ASSIGNMENT

Student No._____ Date_____

Name_____

Street No._____

City_____ State_____

Brush drawing by John Berkey.

Brush and Ink

No doubt you have already discovered art work can be done in a number of ways. Originality is always in demand, and consequently, artists try to develop their styles by experimenting with different tools. For instance, you will remember the different effects that you got when you used two kinds of points on your pencil (broad point and fine point). Well, by using both brush and pen, you will also be able to introduce a variety of line and technique into your ink work.

While pen and ink are still used extensively in commercial art, today's looser, freer techniques often seem to call for brush work. For with a brush you will be able to get more graceful, freer lines than you can with a pen. Because the brush is so delicate and responds so easily to pressure, it is possible to make smooth lines that range from very thin to extremely thick. And this flexibility of line is helpful in creating interest and contrast.

Brush work is fast. Many artists find they can meet deadlines easier by using rapid brush techniques. For with a brush you not only can make any line that you can with a pen, but you can also fill in large areas of black in less time and with less trouble. By using a brush you will be able to save time and give your pictures a spontaneous "flashy" quality.

The loose, spontaneous quality of the brush can often be successfully combined with pen and ink. In fact, combinations of pen and brush work are usually more common and more successful than drawings done with only a pen or a brush. For by combining the two tools, you will be able to get the crisp, clear simplicity of pen and ink, and also the fresh, free qualities of brush. You will probably find opportunities to do ink drawings with pen, brush, and with a combination of both of these tools.

Choosing a Brush

When you begin experimenting with ink drawing, you will find it easier to get line variety (thick-thin) with a brush than with a pen. The reason for this is that pen points are made of metal (width cannot be varied much even with changes in pressure), while the "point" of a brush is soft (width can vary greatly with even the slightest pressure). And because the brush does not make the "even" lines of a pen point, work done with the brush has a more fluid, freer quality. With a little practice and a good brush you will soon be able to make lines that change gracefully from thick to thin.

But how do you tell if you have a good brush . . . one capable of making smooth lines without "furry" edges? Price is not always the best indicator of the quality of a brush. Although you will find that good brushes (red sable) will cost more than the "sets" of brushes they sell in the five and ten cent stores, it is not necessary to buy the most expensive brushes. Instead, when you select a brush you should test it to see if the hairs come to a single, smooth point. To "test" an ink or a water color brush, you should actually see how it "works" when wet. If you dip it into a jar of water and roll the hairs against the palm of your hand, you will be able to see if the hairs come together in a smooth point. Most art supply stores furnish a little pan of water for you to test your brushes, but if there is not any water available you will have to rely on the appearance of the dry brush. Notice the hairs and see if they come to a single point (a split would cause a double line.)

When you begin to work with brushes you will not need a great many. In fact, you will have enough with the two ink brushes in your outfit. Look at the two ink brushes and notice that one is slightly smaller than the other. The smaller brush is good for fine line work, and the larger is suitable for thicker lines. They are both red sable brushes, and will last you a long time. However, as you proceed in the art field, you may want to get several more brushes. If you become interested in lettering, you will certainly want a "single stroke" or a "square tip" brush. But for now, your brushes will be more than adequate, so take care of them.

Brush Care

As an artist, you will soon learn that much of your success is dependent upon the materials you use. If you use inferior materials, there is a chance your art work will suffer. And no matter how much you pay for your equipment, the only way to keep it "first-rate" is to take care of it. If you give your brushes the proper care, they can last you twice as long and save you money.

In handling your brushes, the most important single rule to remember is: "Keep your brushes clean and dry, except when you are using them." Wash your brushes every time you are through with them because dry, built-up ink in the core (center) will cause the brushes to deteriorate. This dead ink drys the natural oils out of the hair and your brushes become stiff and brittle. The ideal ink brush should be flexible and springy – but not stiff.

In order to keep your brushes flexible and springy, you must wash them with luke warm water every time you are through using them. Never use hot water on them because it makes the hair fall out. When you are ready to put your brushes away for a long period of time, you should clean them carefully with a mild soap and warm water. After you have rinsed all of the soap out, you should shape the hairs by bringing them to a point and drying the handles with a soft cloth.

Brush Strokes

Because the brush produces so many different effects, it is impossible to give each stroke a special name. It is just as difficult to say there is any certain number of strokes. However, most artists recognize three *general* categories: the first is loosely termed *Crisp Line or Thick and Thin;* the second, *Drybrush;* and the third, *Split Brush*. These special brush methods also come easier on textured, rough paper.

Thick and Thin—Crisp Lines

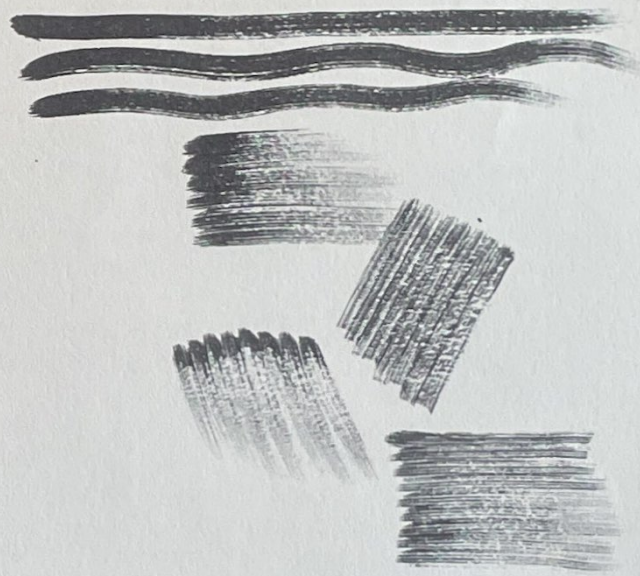
When doing Crisp Line strokes you start by loading your brush with a good supply of ink. The simplest way to use these strokes is to group them side by side to produce a striped effect. You can get variations in this by the length of the strokes or by changing their width. On the western drawing these lines can be noted on the ground underneath and just behind the horses.

These straight crisp lines will be more interesting if you change the weight of the strokes as you pull them across the page. Using an uneven pressure as you make the stroke will produce the "Thick and Thin" wavy look. You can see these thick and thin strokes are very effective on the canyon wall behind the horsemen.

Dry Brush

The dry brush method is named from the fact that ink is applied to the paper with a brush that is almost dry. Before each dry brush stroke is made, the brush must be "dragged" across a piece of scratch paper to wipe off the extra ink. This is the only way to get the soft feathery look, the gray "color" of a good dry brush drawing. Even though your black drawing ink is always jet black, a gray tone can be made because some of the white paper shows through every dry brush stroke.

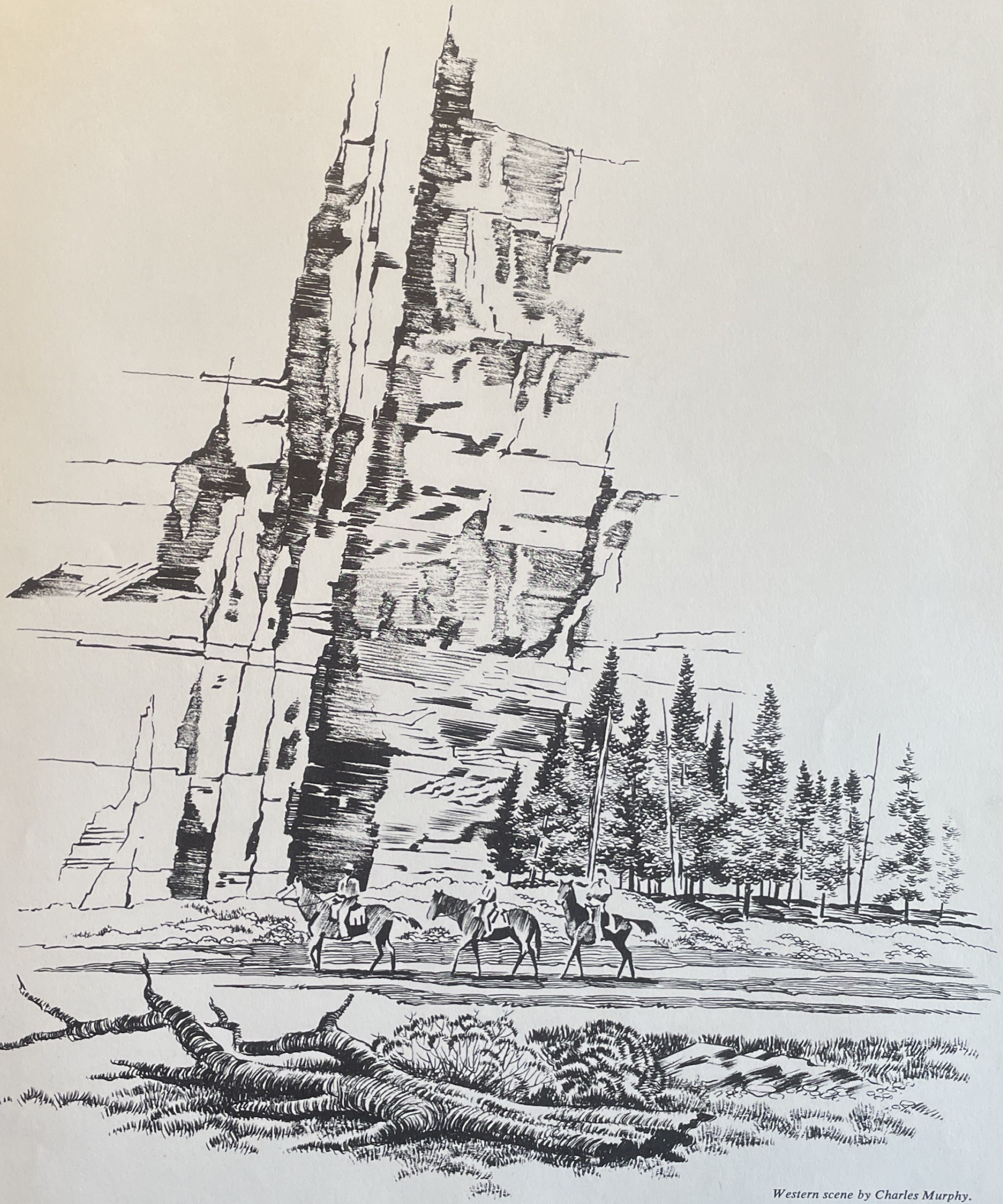
In the western illustration the artist used this method a great deal, shading the rocks. Note that each stroke is different in shape as well as in value. You'll remember that this same western scene was used in the pencil section for the Fine Point style of drawing. Now, turn back and compare the two methods. Many areas are handled differently because the brush and the pencil each have certain limitations. You will want to experiment with every drawing method so you will be skillful with all your tools.



Split Brush

Split brush drawing is very much like Dry Brush as both are good to show tones and textures. The Split Brush method is also useful for areas of small complicated details. On the western picture you can see this in the lower foreground where the artist used a Split Brush to do the grass, bushes and the bark on the fallen tree trunk.

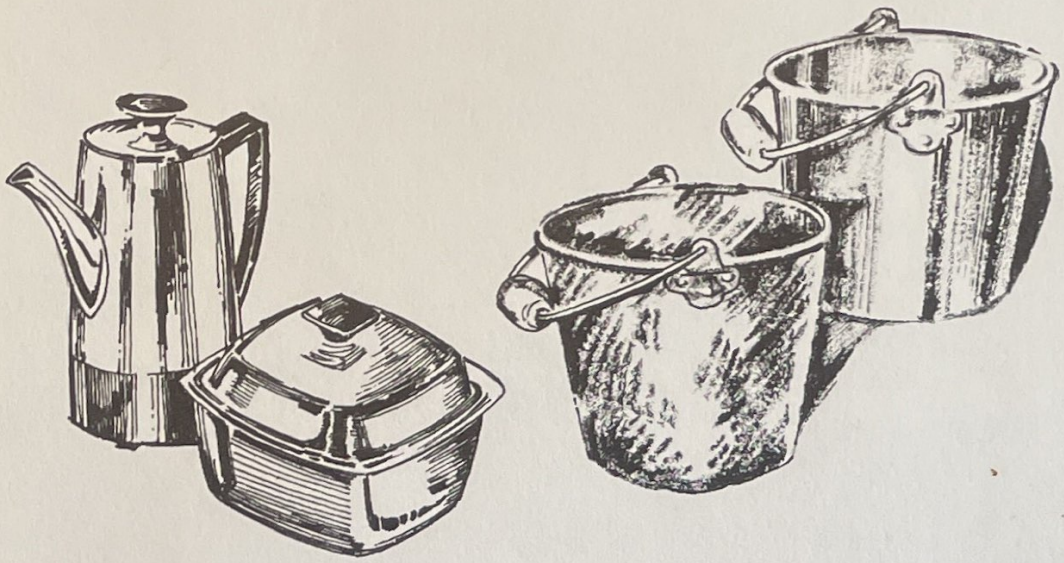
To make this type of stroke you actually have to "split" your brush into sections. This is done after the brush is dipped in the ink and before you make the stroke. Try using a toothpick or hairpin for this because they can be discarded after they get covered with ink. When you push your "pick" into the brush to separate the bristles, you don't have to worry about getting any special number of hairs in each section. Your divisions will be different with each stroke. By dividing the brush into three or maybe four sections you should be able to get an interesting split brush technique.



Western scene by Charles Murphy.

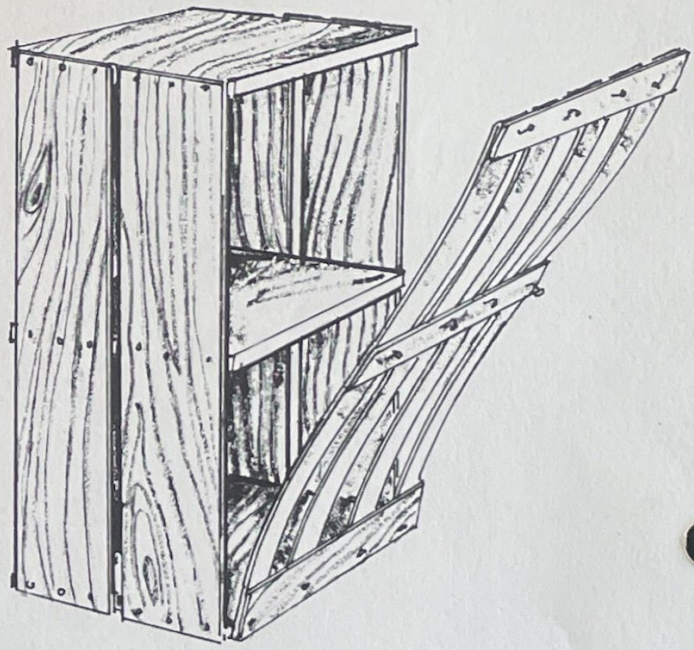
INK TEXTURE PRACTICE

After studying the artwork on these two pages, turn to the sheet headed "Texture Practice". On this sheet there are a number of exercises for you to do. The outlines have been provided for you because you will be concerned only with textures and lines in this section. Work slowly and carefully. The time you put into your artwork always shows.

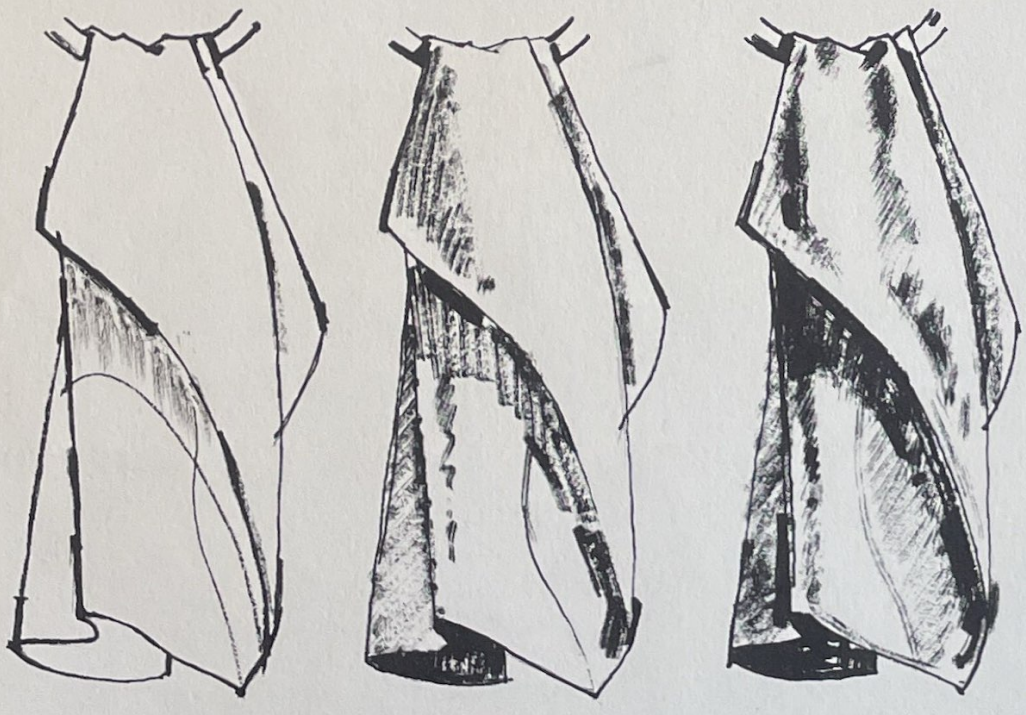


Shiny surfaces have strong, sharp contrasts. Notice the different quality of the battered pail — texture differences increase through age and use. The artist rendered the coffee pot and casserole in pen and the pails in pen and dry brush.

The artist has created this tree by beginning with middle tones of dry brush. Later he added the darker, more solid brush areas for contrast and depth.

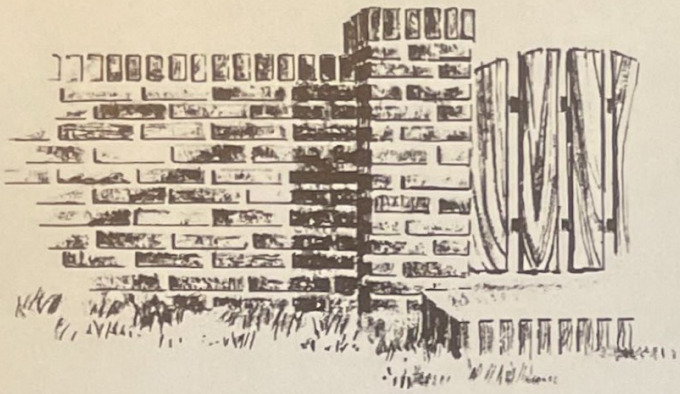


The artist has used his pen and ink for the sharp outlines on this wooden crate. After he drew the outline, he added the dry brush shading and wood grain.

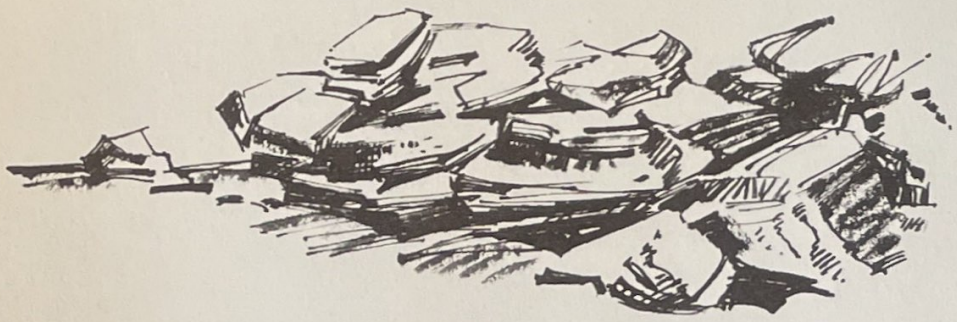


This step-by-step development of the dishtowel shows you the many varieties of line that can be used on one drawing. First the artist used pen and ink to get the outline of the cloth. Then he added the light shading with dry brush. After adding this shading, he finished the drawing by applying the solid, dark areas of shadow.

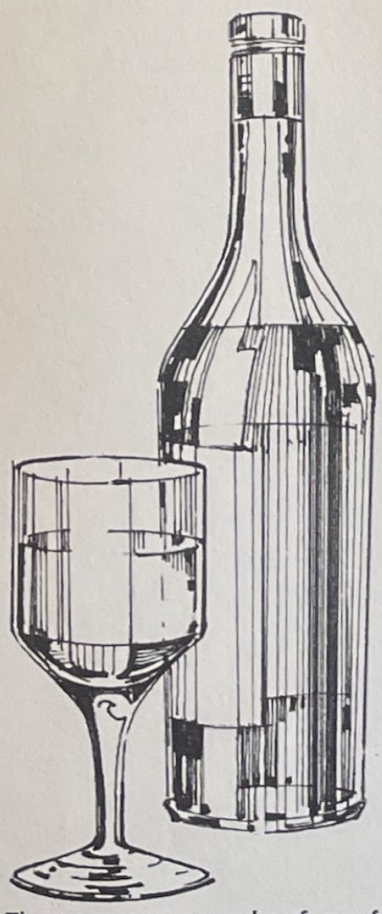
This block of wood demonstrates excellent work with "split brush." By using the split brush technique, the artist was able to give the impression of wood grain.



To get the texture of this brick wall, the artist has used pen for the outline and dry brush for the actual textures. A single, well placed brush stroke can give the exact texture of a brick.



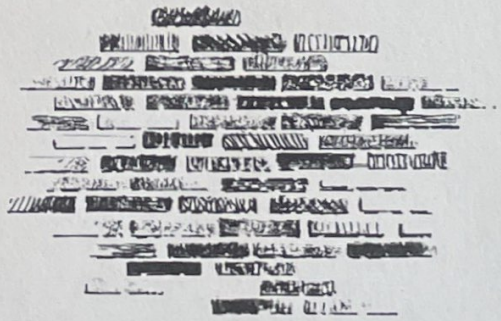
This pile of stones was rendered primarily in pen and ink. The artist has, however, used some large areas of dry brush shading for contrast and variety.

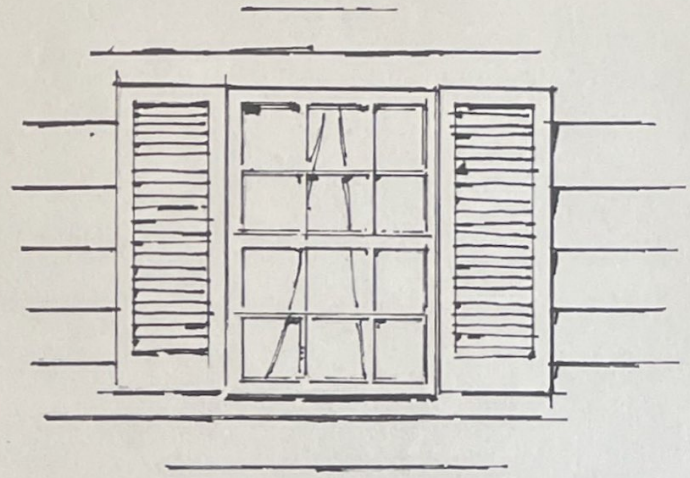


The transparency and surface of the glass subjects was carefully studied, then rendered in pen and ink.

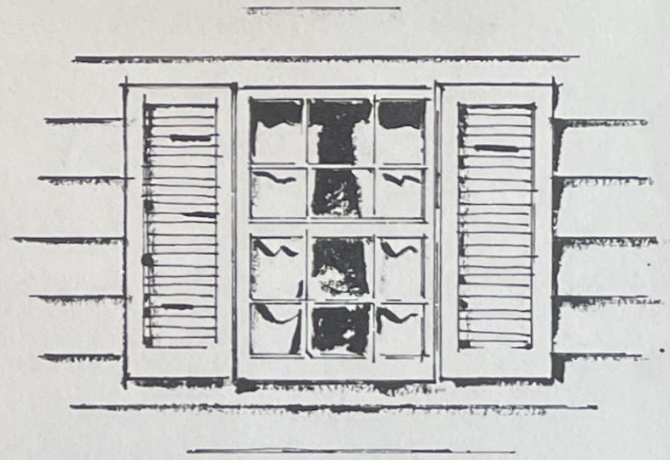
The artist used pen work over dry brush work to achieve the texture of this stone wall. Notice the crosshatching he has done with his pen on some of the darker stones.

The artist used pen and brush to create the textures of this brick wall. He introduced contrast by making some bricks solid black and others very light (dry brush).

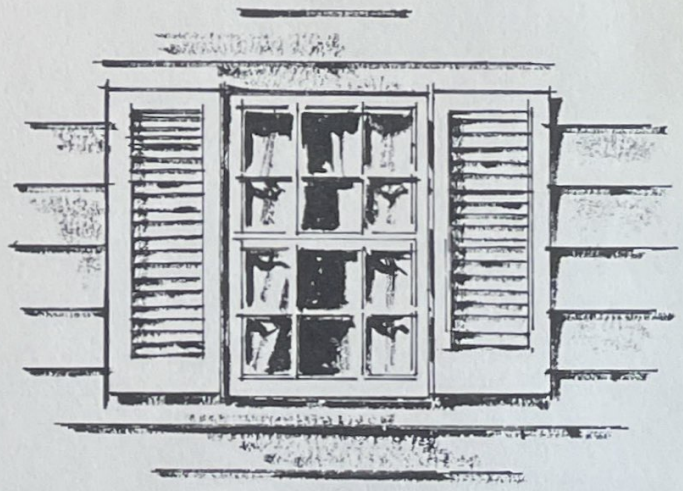




From his pencil sketch the artist developed a careful pen and ink outline of the windows. He has not rendered the details, but merely established the structure.



At this stage the artist applied some of the dark areas with brush. He concentrated on shadows that would give depth rather than those that would imply texture.



The drawing was completed by adding middle tones of dry brush. The artist created this realistic drawing by using three separate steps.

Drawing From Photographs

Photo courtesy of Northwest Airlines.

Many commercial and fine artists work from photographs. And as you continue in your art career, you will find many opportunities to draw from photos like this one. The commercial artist who drew this airline hostess used the photograph above for a model.

Study this "literal" or exact drawing of the girl. Untrained artists try to reproduce the subject in a photograph just as they see it. The trained artist does too, but he then makes changes to make his art saleable.

To make the desired changes, the advertising artist placed a piece of tracing paper over the first sketch. He lengthened the neck, slimmed her down and removed some of the lines around her eyes and mouth. He also enlarged the emblem on the hat and drew a large steak on the tray.

After the artist finished the tracing paper drawing (with corrections) he turned it over to see if the proportions were correct. By looking at the reverse side of the drawing it is possible to pick out the little "mistakes" and inconsistencies that can make a drawing weak.

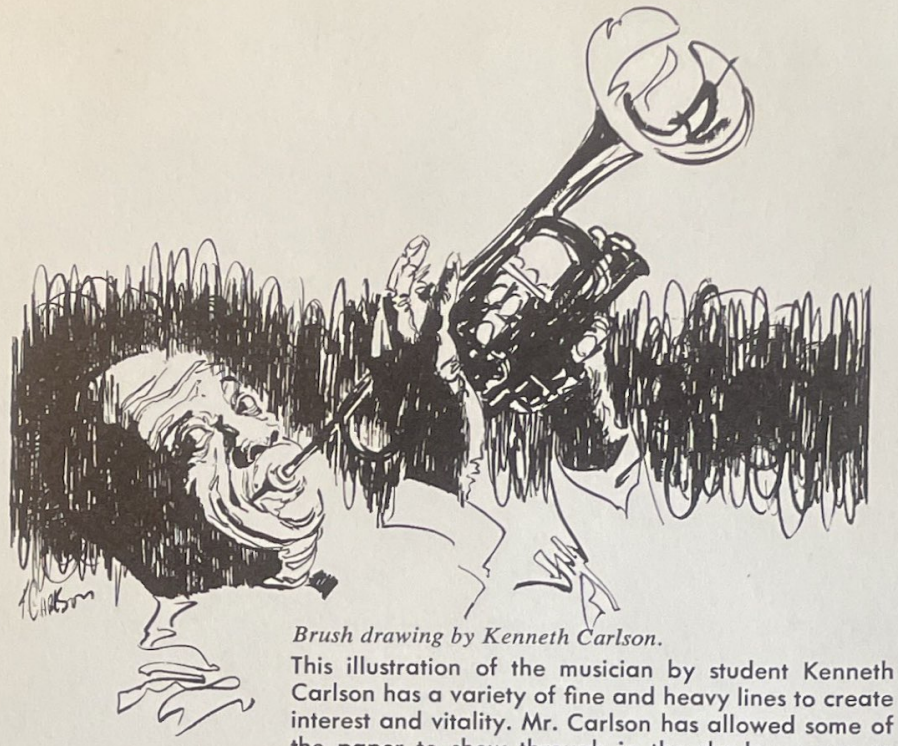
To transfer his drawing the artist placed a piece ot graphite paper between the drawing and the clean paper (graphite-side down) and traced his lines onto the new paper. At this point he made a "last minute" check for errors and added some of the important details.

After the sketch was transferred and all the details checked, the artist was ready to begin the inking of his drawing. He started with his pen and ink because he could get a delicate line for his "outline" of the figure.

Once the basic pen and ink work was done, the artist put in some of the large dark shadow areas with his brush. Notice the fresh, sweeping quality of the brush work, and how effectively it contrasts with the fine line pen work. By adding shadow areas, the artist created new stability and depth.

In this finished drawing you can see how effectively the artist used the brush and pen to create this illustration. While his finished ink drawing resembles the photograph in pose and character, he interpreted the subject creatively so it would fit his particular purposes.

Brush and Ink

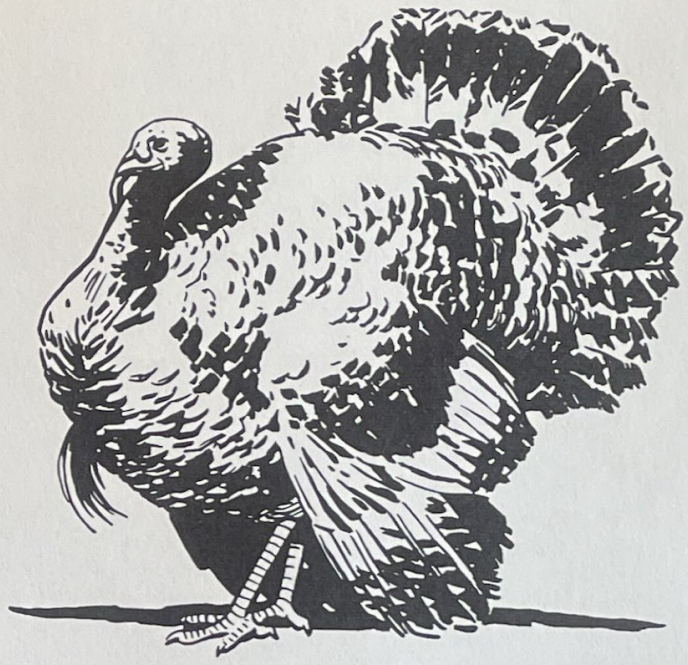


Brush drawing by Kenneth Carlson.

This illustration of the musician by student Kenneth Carlson has a variety of fine and heavy lines to create interest and vitality. Mr. Carlson has allowed some of the paper to show through in the shadow areas to keep them from becoming too solid and heavy.

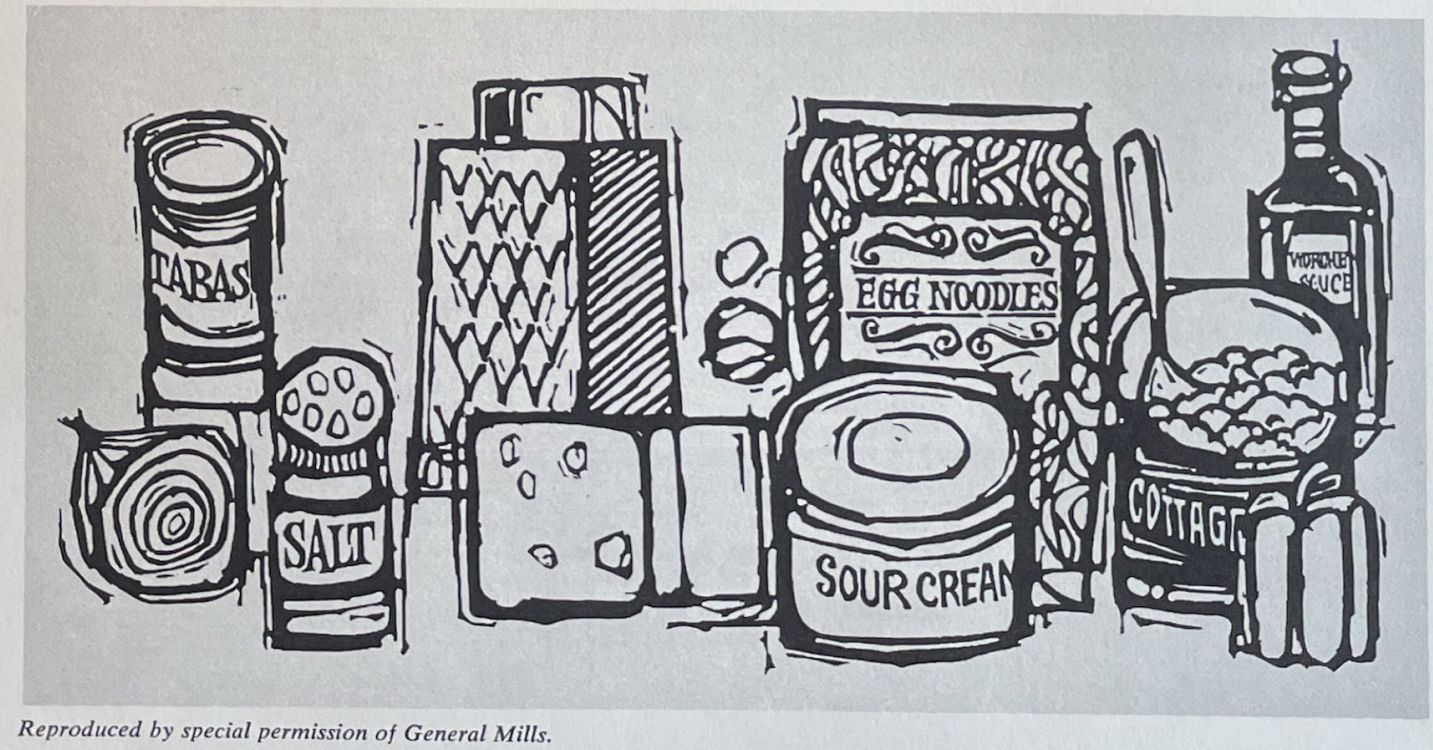
Courtesy of Dayton's, Minneapolis, Minn.

This advertisement, used by Dayton's, is done in a loose, flowing ink and brush technique.



This illustration of the turkey shows you the variety of effects you will be able to create with brush and ink.

Notice the bold, stylized quality in this "still-life" advertisement run by General Mills. The artist has used his brush in a bold manner to give the impression of a wood cut (print made from a block of wood). The simplified and modern drawing is effective and eye-catching.



Reproduced by special permission of General Mills.

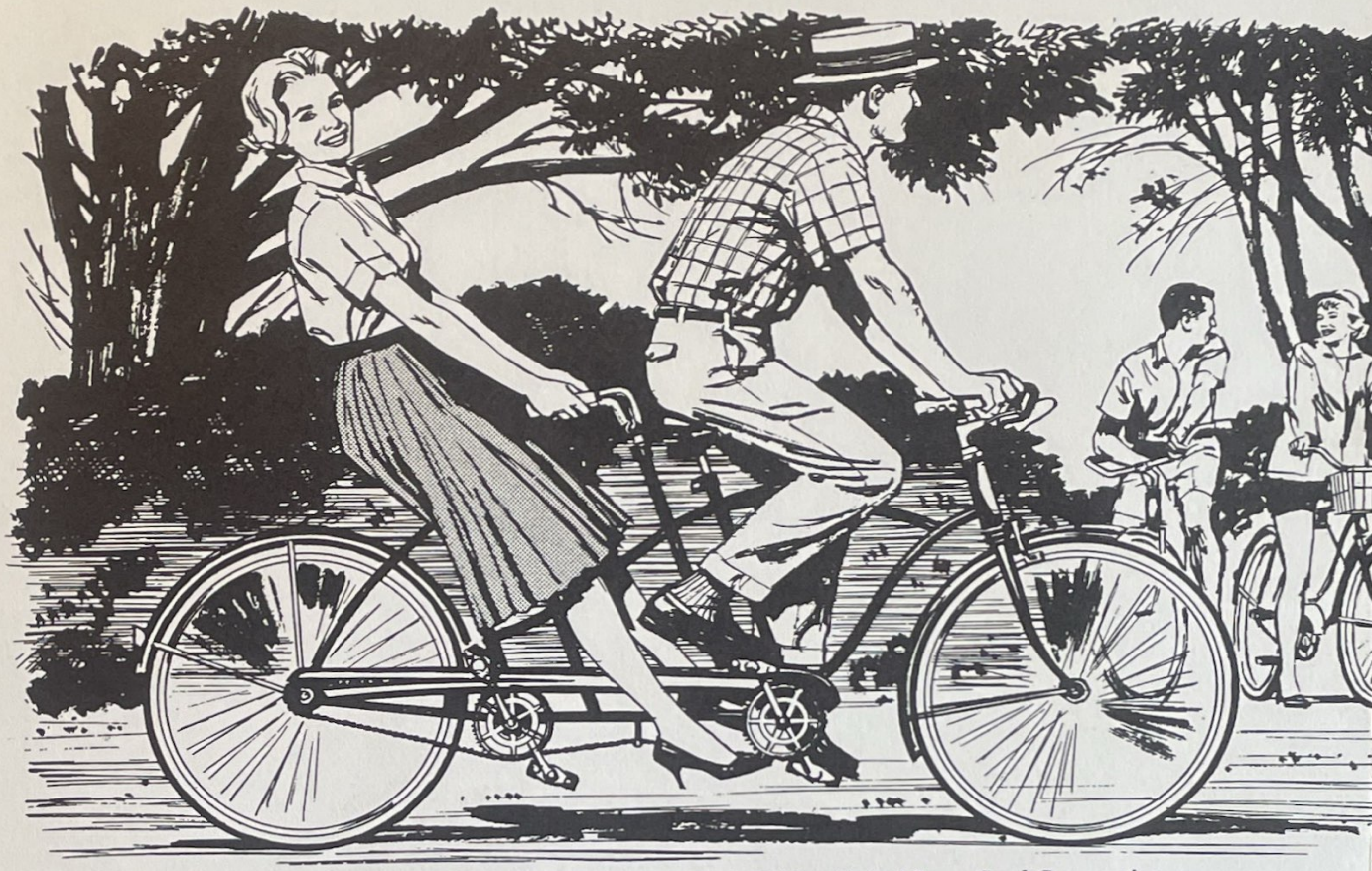
Design by John Kemper.

Combination Brush and Pen

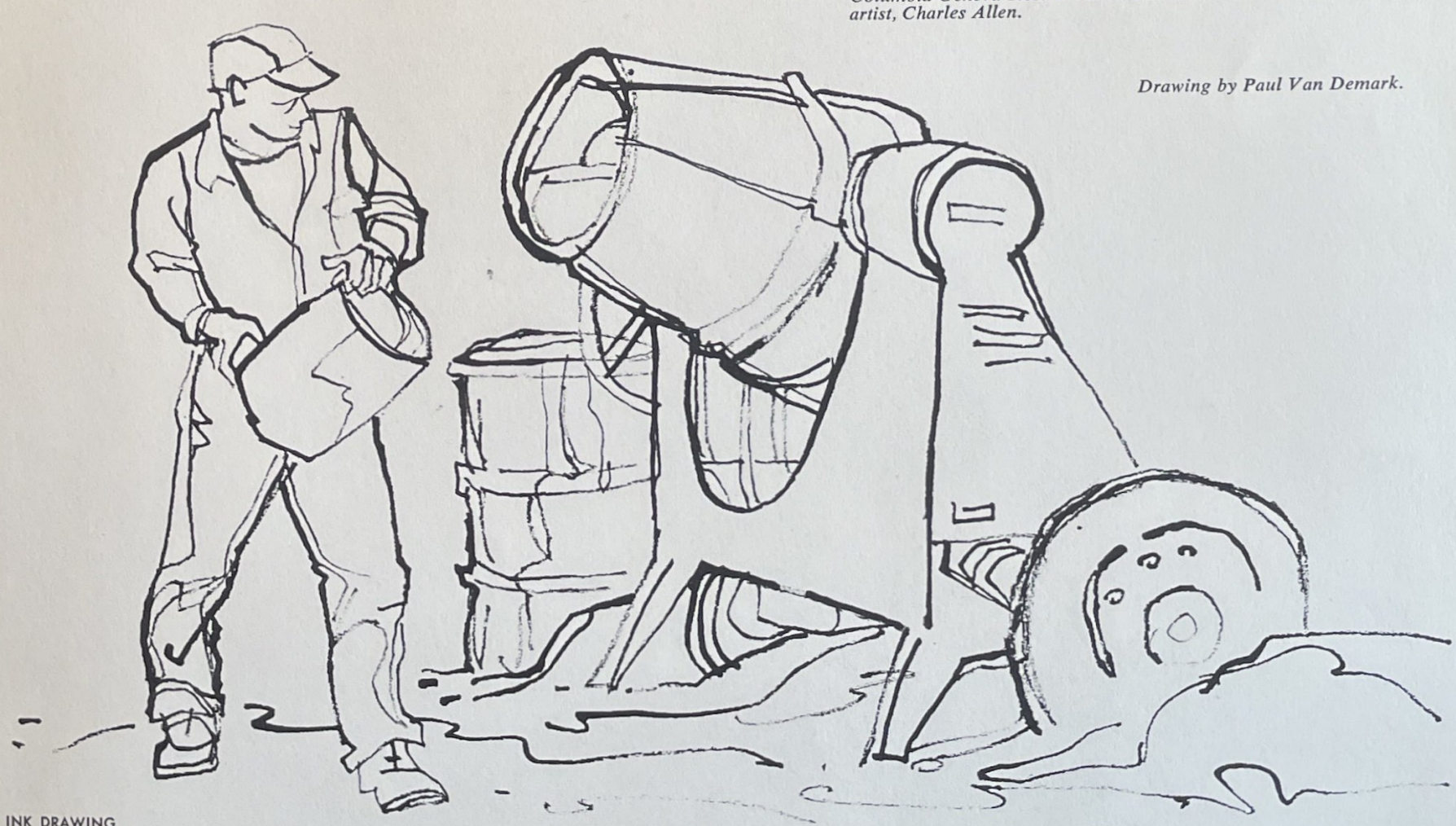
This well planned design by John Kemper, student of Art Instruction Schools, is a fine example of pen and brush combination. Notice how the artist has used the fine lines of pen and combined them with the large solid areas of shade (applied with a brush). The zig-zag theme (roof, trees) holds the design together and gives it a charming decorative quality.

In the picture of the bicycle riders, the artist has maintained the crispness of fine line pen work and has also created the free movement of brush strokes. Notice how he developed the leaves and large shadow areas by using a brush. He relied on the pen to add the fine details in the foreground.

Paul Van Demark developed this ink drawing of the workman from a photograph. Mr. Van Demark simplified the background and eliminated many of the minor disturbances. The dramatic use of thick to thin line gives this picture life and vitality. The artist actually used a small stick to apply the ink.



Columbia-Geneva Steel Division United States Steel Corporation, artist, Charles Allen.



Drawing by Paul Van Demark.

Checking Up On Yourself

As you develop your skills in art, you will probably be doing more and more ink drawings. For, once you have mastered the ink techniques we have discussed in this section, you will be able to do finished, polished drawings just like those reproduced in newspapers and magazines. And by being able to do this kind of commercial work, you will be coming closer to your goals in the art field. Now, let's review some of the important points you should have learned.

Do You Remember That:

1. You should experiment with different types of paper to see the interesting results you can get.
2. You should keep your tools in good working condition by keeping them clean and ready for use.
3. Much of the experience and knowledge you acquired from your pencil studies can be carried over and applied to your experiments with ink drawings.
4. Spot illustrations are small drawings that are used to "spruce up" printed material.
5. You cannot always "reproduce" your pencil drawings in ink because the two media are so different. Ink is fluid and black; you shouldn't try to make it look like pencil.
6. You should use black waterproof ink (India Ink) because it does not "smear" easily.
7. Good ink brushes are made of red sable. The hairs come to a single point.
8. Penholders with large rubber or cork grips tend to be messier than the plain wood types. Ink from the edges of your bottle soaks into the grips and stains your fingers.
9. A brush is more versatile than a pen and therefore can make lines that vary greatly in width.
10. The "ply" of the paper refers to its weight or thickness; the larger the grading number, the heavier the weight.
11. You will be able to keep your brushes in good working order if you remember to wash them after you get done using them. Never use hot water to rinse or wash your brushes.
12. Crosshatch technique is a useful method for shading in pen and ink work.
13. Opaque white paint (paint thick enough to cover black) is very helpful for correcting minor errors in your ink drawings.
14. The nib is the same thing as the pen point.

Did You:

1. Try all of the ink textures in the practice section?
2. Find interesting objects around the house to draw?
3. Did you study all the drawings in this section to see how the artists obtained their results?
4. Try drawing from a photograph?

Ink Drawing Lesson No. 2

We have given you two outlines of the Bill Fleming seated figure (the extra is to be used if you make a mistake). Before you begin the actual rendering, you should make several more outlines on scratch paper. Once you've finished these tracings, try the ink techniques you see in the art. Study the reproduced picture and decide where he used brush and where he used pen and ink. Notice, for instance, that the artist used pen for the details and crosshatching, and used brush for the bolder lines and solid areas.

After you've practiced with your brush and crow quill (also spelled Croquill) pen, you will be ready to render the outline drawing. Your assignment will be graded on how carefully your work is done and how much your picture looks like Mr. Fleming's. If you happen to make a large mistake you will probably want to start over on the second assignment sheet. But if your mistake is a small one, try correcting it with your eraser or opaque white. After you've finished the ink drawing, send it to the School with Assignment No. 1 and your Ink Test.

Drawing by Bill Fleming.

INK DRAWING LESSON ASSIGNMENT

Student No._____ Date_____

Name_____

Street No._____

City_____ State_____

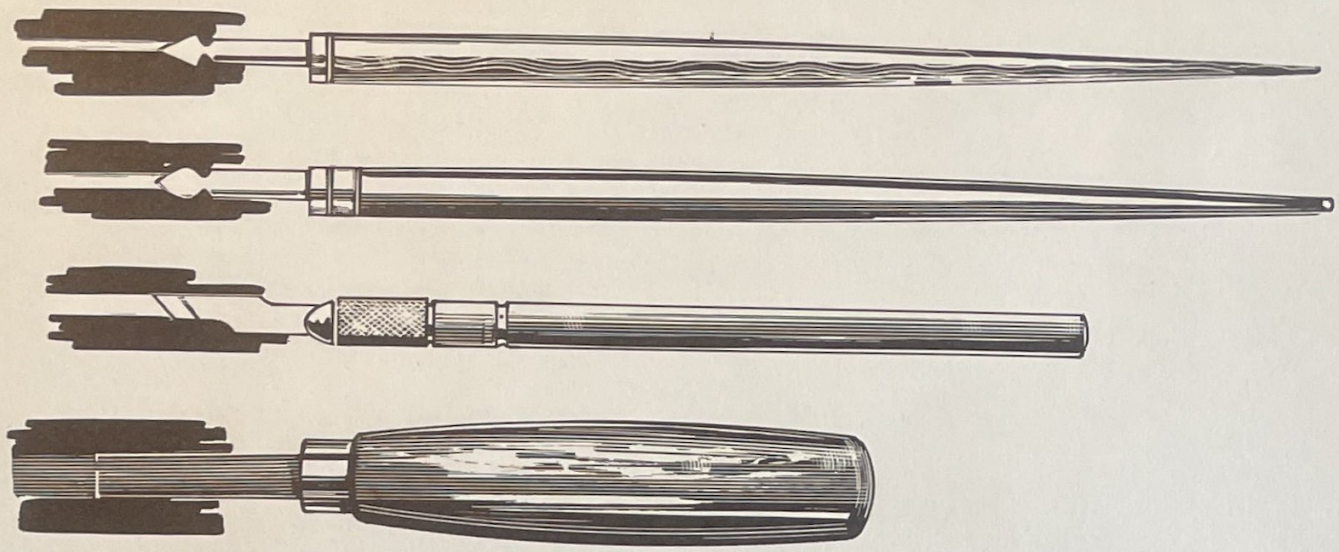
Ink Extras

Most ink work is done with materials just like the kind you've been using from your drawing outfit. The pen and brush remain the most popular tools for applying ink and developing drawings. There are, however, many different types of pens and brushes suited for particular jobs. And naturally, there are also special methods for handling these materials. As a special bonus, we have prepared this sub-section to introduce you to a few of the ways ink can be handled with different tools.

Of all the new tools and developments, perhaps the felt tip pen and scratchboard techniques are the most popular. Scratchboard is the grandfather of all other special ink techniques. It has been used for years, and yet it is still popular with commercial artists. The finished "scratched-out" drawing looks like a woodcut or a wood engraving. The felt tip pen is a more recent development than scratchboard. This pen can be used to get the loose, free quality of brush work (instead of a metal nib, the drawing "point" is a felt strip). It is useful for fast sketches as well as for fine art drawings and commercial illustrations. Because it is so speedy, many artists combine the felt tip pen with brush to make impressive posters.

As a beginning artist, you will soon realize the value of making effective posters. Almost all artists are called upon to do lettering at one time or another. And whether you do them with felt tip pen or brush and ink, there are certain things you need to know. We have included some lettering helps and samples in this division to acquaint you with the field. And once you become good at lettering, you will probably be called upon to do posters for local businesses, churches, schools and clubs. Many of our students have earned their first money in commercial art by doing signs and posters. Some of the lettering in this section could be done with the type of equipment you already have. However, special lettering pens and brushes are used by professional artists. If you get interested and want to do some lettering, get the proper tools. Doing a good job will be much easier if you use the special equipment discussed.

Once you have the basics down and can handle the pens and brushes you have been working with in this section, you might like to try some of the things presented here. The extra materials for scratchboard, felt tip pen work and lettering can be purchased at any art store. And, it might be worth your while to give a couple of these techniques a whirl.



Scratchboard

Scratchboard drawings are fun and challenging partly because they're done in the reverse of other black and white ink drawings. For instance, when you do scratchboard work, instead of adding black ink to create the shadows and shading, you have to "scrape off" the ink to get highlights or light areas. The end result is something like the appearance of a white chalk drawing on a blackboard.

The scraping is possible because scratchboard drawings are done on special bristle board – board that is coated with a film of smooth plaster or clay-like material. You should handle the boards carefully because if they are bent, the coating can crack. Before you start the actual drawing you have to "paint" the board with India ink. Be sure the ink coating is solid black; if it isn't, it's too thin and needs another layer. After the board is inked and perfectly dry, you are ready to begin drawing.

Your preliminary sketches can be done on regular white practice paper and then can be transferred to your inked surface. To do this you will need a transfer sheet similar to the graphite one you made for pencil work. Only this time, instead of using graphite (it won't show on the black ink) you should rub the paper with white chalk. Then, insert the transfer sheet under your sketch (chalked side against the inked board) and trace the lines of your drawing. When you lift the paper off the board, you will be able to see the white outline on the inked surface. You must be careful not to smudge the "outline" because the chalk will rub off easily. Your next step will be to redraw the chalk lines with a white colored pencil. This will be a more lasting guide, and one that will show up on the black ink.

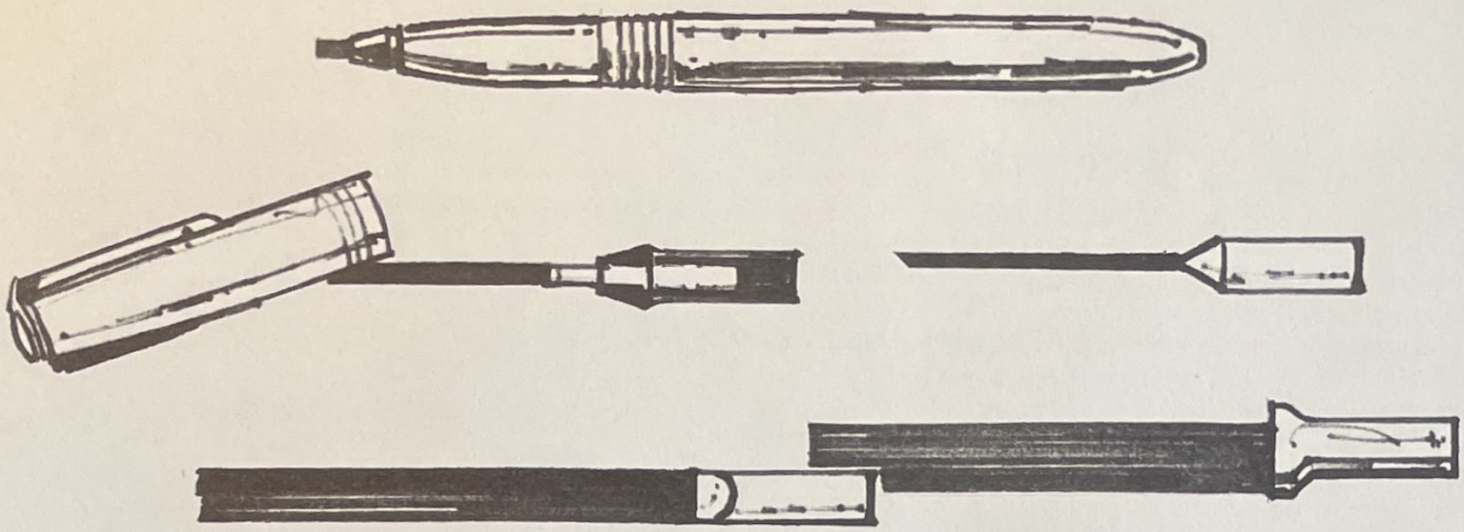
This drawing in white pencil should be done very carefully for it will serve as the guide for your final art. Your finished picture will be only as good as your white transfer drawing. To begin the rendering (or scratching) you can use a sharp scratch knife or a metal stylus (a pointed instrument) to scratch out areas you want white (the penciled areas). The plaster-like material makes scratching easy, and you must remember to go slowly and carefully. For once you make a false line, it's difficult to repair. When you begin practicing this art, you will soon find that you will be able to do almost everything in scratchboard that you can in pen and ink. However, because you are removing black areas to create highlights, scratchboard art seldom looks exactly like pen and ink drawings. In fact, scratchboard drawings give the impression of woodcuts or wood engravings (prints made from carved blocks of wood). And because scratchboard drawings give the appearance of woodcuts and take less than half the time and effort, they have been very popular with commercial artists.

Many artists enjoy doing scratchboard drawings for a "break" from their pen and brush work. It's fun, and once you become familiar with it, it can also be rewarding.

Rather than brushing on a complete coat of India ink, this artist first did a complete pen and ink rendering working black on white. Then after blacking in the legs and wood areas, he scratched out the white details.

Illustration by Jack Krough

When an artist plans to do a scratchboard drawing he can ink his entire working area, or only those areas where white will be scratched out of the black ink. The technique the artist uses depends upon the result he wants. This artist inked the entire working area of his drawing because he wanted a dark background and a minimum of large white areas.



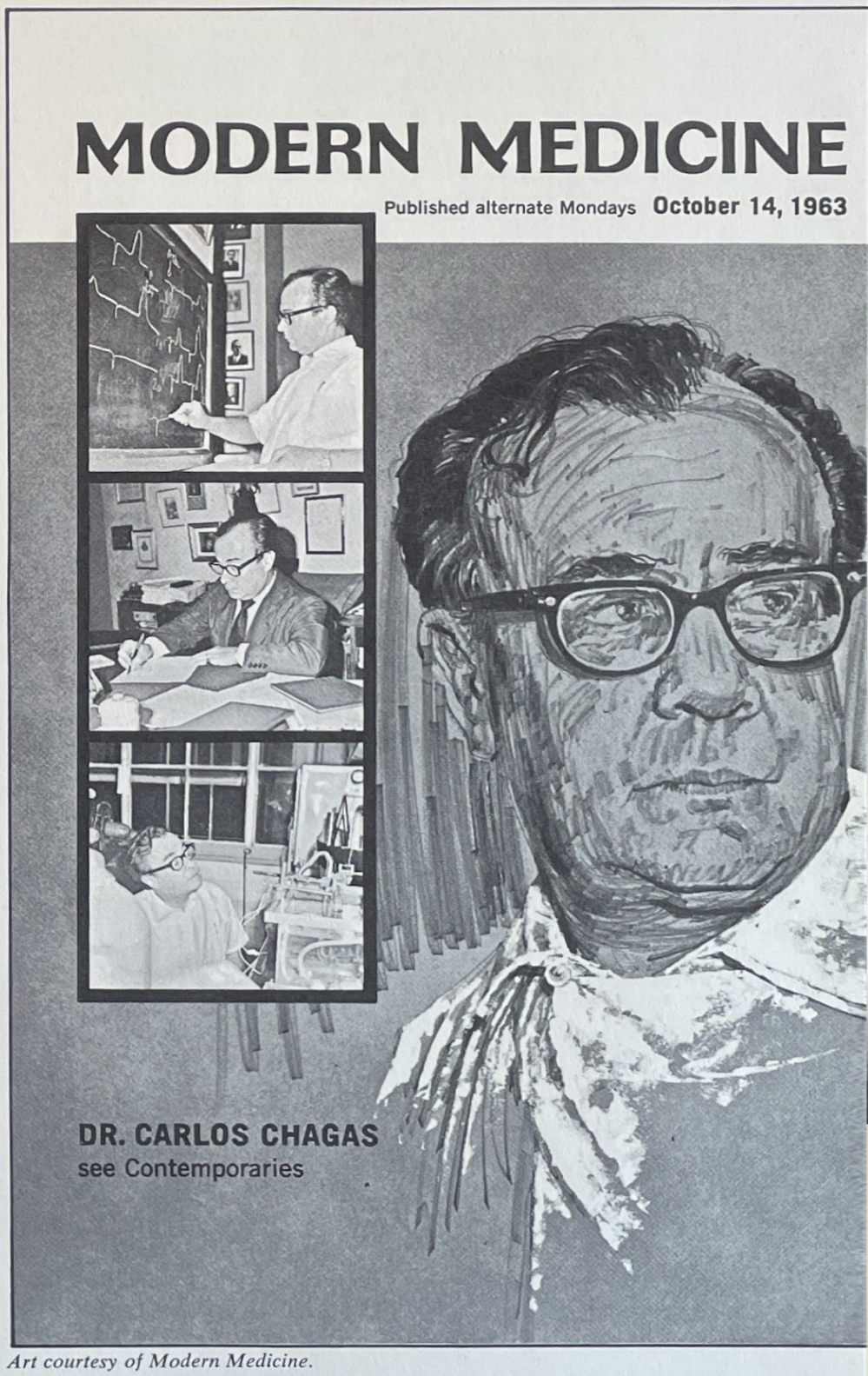
Felt Pens

In addition to using the tried and true methods of rendering (pencil, pen and brush drawings) commercial artists of today are always looking for new and exciting techniques that will make their work more individual and effective. At one time, scratchboard drawing was the answer. When it was developed, it was considered to be an exciting and different method – which it is. But it is no longer a new-comer in the art field, and so, artists have been looking for still different approaches. Many artists have found an answer to their search for variety and individuality – the felt tip pen. For with this pen they can get the looseness of a brush drawing, the crispness of a pen drawing and the variety of a combination brush and pen work.

At first glance, the felt pen looks something like a fountain pen. Except, it doesn't have a metal point. In fact, it doesn't have a "point" at all. Rather, it has a strip of felt that gets soaked with ink. It is this wet felt that makes the lines. The felt strip can be changed in order to create different lines. The available tips range from heavy chisel points to fine rounded ones. And because they can be changed easily, there is no reason – or necessity to have more than one or two of these pens. The handle of the pen unscrews and this handle is then filled with ink. The ink has a solvent in it to make it dry fast, and this quick-drying quality is especially helpful for doing fast sketches. This ink comes in a variety of colors, just as the felts come in a variety of shapes. To get the ink "flowing" you may have to "pump" the pen up and down several times (felt point on a piece of scratch paper).

Even if you have just one felt pen, and just one color ink, you can still get a great deal of contrast and interest. As you experiment with the pen, you will find that by working slowly you will get an even, solid line. And as you begin to work faster, the line can become more feathery (like dry brush). The width of lines can also be altered by using different parts of the tip. If you want heavy, thick lines, you can get them by using the "flat" (wide part) of the nib. But, if you want finer lines, you can get them by using the side (narrow part) of the tip. Once you begin to experiment with the felt tip pen you will find any number of possible effects.

And because of these effects, the commercial artist finds the pen extremely useful. Artists use them for sketching and layout and also for finished art. The bold quality of the felt tip pen reproduces well and helps artists get their work done in less time. The possibilities that the felt pen offers are almost unlimited – give it a try!



Art courtesy of Modern Medicine.

This cover illustration was done with felt tip pen. Notice the variety of lines and the free sketchy quality. The artist used a little opaque white for contrast and accent. Many fine artists make sketches like this with felt tip pens because they can be done quickly, there is no breaking of leads or sharpening of pencils, and felt pen sketches don't smear.

Lettering

Both commercial and fine artists have many opportunities to use their lettering knowledge. Because there are so many openings for accomplished lettering men (poster, sign and display work), artists often make extra money with this skill. Lettering is not only a must for experienced artists in art departments, but beginners often get their start by doing free-lance poster and sign work.

Whether lettering is done in pen or brush, in ink or paint, one of the most important qualities of this art work is neatness. A good lettering artist must be neat, patient and able to select the proper style for his message. You can develop these qualities in your work. And, once your lettering is up to a professional level, you will have a chance to do posters for churches, schools, businesses and civic clubs in your own community.

Pen and Ink Lettering

Good pen and ink lettering is effective and eye-catching. Pen work is useful to the poster artist because it works for both small letters in "body copy" and larger letters in main headings. This is because there are many different nibs (pen points) for lettering. There are nibs that range from the narrow crow quill that you have, to the very wide "speedball" points that give results similar to brush work. The narrow points are best for small letters and for outlining block letters that are later filled in with brush and ink, while the wider points are bold enough to be used alone.

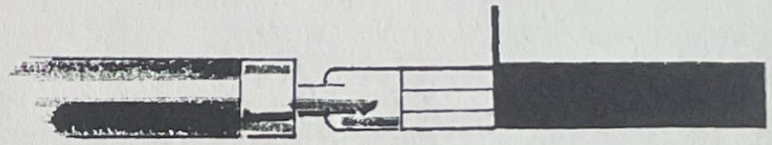
Because pen and ink lettering with wide nibs is often faster than brush lettering, it's very popular with professional poster artists. And once *you* learn to use these special lettering pens, you will be on your way to making effective posters with a minimum of time and effort.

Instead of coming to a point, this 2B "speedball" pen has a flat circle of metal on the end of it. This particular type of pen is especially effective for Gothic lettering. Notice the 2B pen strokes on the adjoining page.

The 4B pen has a smaller metal circle than the 2B. Try the practice strokes you see on the next page. Notice that the line width doesn't vary with B-series pens.

This C-1 has a "square" point. It makes wide strokes when pulled directly toward you and thin strokes when used sideways. The sharp, square edges of this point are suited to Roman style alphabets.

This C-3 pen point is smaller than the C-1 point. The lines of C-series pens vary in thickness when you make curved strokes.

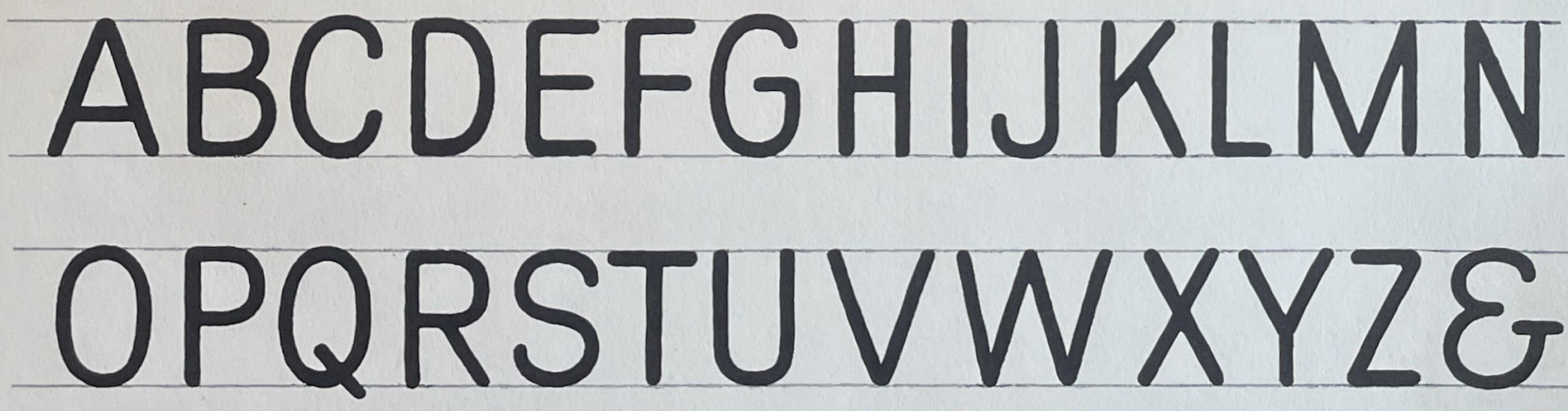


The metal "brush" is actually a very large pen point. It's called a "brush" because it can make broad, bold lines similar to brush strokes. Study the different effects that the artist has created in his practice strokes and try them if you want to become good at lettering.

Using Guide Lines

Guide lines are an important part of constructing letters. When the guide lines are drawn carefully and the letters are drawn within them, your letters will all be the same height and won't slant or "droop".

The artist who did this Gothic alphabet (with a B series pen) first ruled guide lines in pencil to locate the position and height of



his letters. He used different guide lines for the upper and lower case letters.

For the capitals (upper case) the artist used two guide lines to indicate the tops and bottoms of all the letters. For the lower case letters the artist used four lines. The middle two lines indicate the top and bottom of the body, and the outer two locate the ascenders (rising legs) and descenders (sinking legs).

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n

o p q r s t u v w x y z

Lettering Styles for Pen

Almost all lettering variations can be grouped into one of the three basic categories: Roman, Gothic and Script.

Roman letters vary in line thickness and often have serifs (cross lines at the top and bottom of letters). Roman alphabets are decorative and have a classic elegance useful for formal purposes.

Gothic lettering is easy to read because it's simple and doesn't have varied line thicknesses. Gothic is often done without serifs and is popular for poster work because it can be done rapidly.

Script lettering resembles handwriting. It can be either formal or casual (depending upon the thickness, slant and precision).

The alphabets in this section were done by professional lettering artists for reproduction. Don't expect your lettering to be as "polished" or perfect; these artists used a variety of pens and brushes and applied opaque white to correct their errors. However, the different lettering styles supplied here can be helpful to you.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 123456789

An artist would create this Roman alphabet with a C-series pen. Notice the lines — some are thick and others are thin. The varying line is found in both capitals and the lower case letters. The artist creates the thick and thin lines by the way he moves the point over the surface of the paper. Moving the point sideways produces a narrow line.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 0123456789

Although this alphabet has serifs (usually associated with Roman style lettering) it does not have varying line thickness. For this Gothic alphabet an artist would probably use a B-series pen point for easy construction and even lines. Once you begin to experiment with lettering, you might like to try a combination of the Gothic lettering and the Roman lettering above it. For instance, you could try putting the Gothic serifs on the Roman lettering for variety and interest.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
TUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

This flowing and decorative Script is done with a C-series pen. By using a wide point, the artist can achieve the thick and thin effects. You can see that Script lettering resembles handwriting, and is popular because of its casual and informal quality.

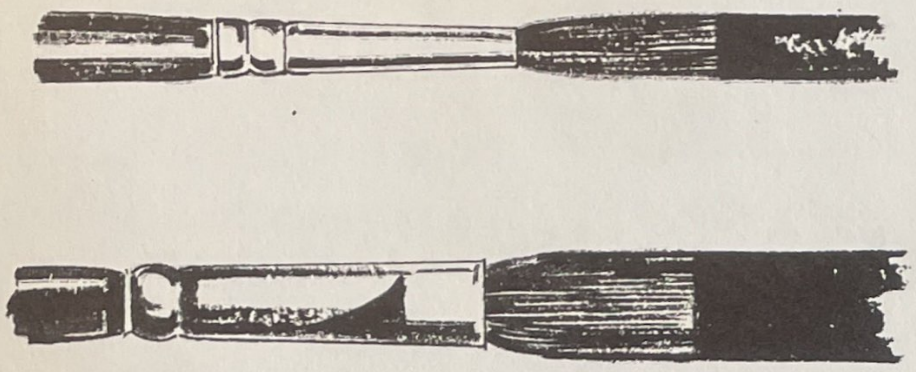
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRS
TUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

This Script is frequently done with a B-series pen. The free and "open" look is casual in appearance, and is easy to read. The consistent line width makes this lettering less decorative and a little more formal than the first Script. Notice that the slight slant of the letters makes them appear quite a bit like handwriting.

Brush Lettering

The line variety possible with brush adds life and vitality to lettering. While this variety is interesting it can also make lettering a little difficult. Perfectly even, straight lines take practice. Brush and ink lettering isn't used too often for posters. Most artists prefer to use tempera paint because it has more body and comes in more colors. Brush and ink is, however, used for lettering that is to be reproduced.

After you have control over your brush with tempera, it will be easier for you to do letters with oil base (bulletin) paints. For, although the paint is different, it won't be difficult to adjust to oil base paint. Tempera works well for posters, but you will need to use oil paint (bulletin) for outdoor signs. Bulletin paint is thicker than regular "house paint", and doesn't run as easily. When you use oil paint you shouldn't apply it with the lettering brushes you use for tempera. Oil paint tends to "coat" your brushes with an oily film that makes tempera lettering difficult. And, for this reason, most artists have two sets of lettering brushes – one set for water base paints and one set for oil. Don't be afraid to experiment with many brushes. Try using your water color brushes for small posters, and use good quality house painting brushes for large outdoor signs. The skills you learn with lettering practice will help you in all phases of your art career.



Although the number 8 brush (on top) has a round ferrule (metal band) like a water color brush, the hairs don't come to a point. The half inch lettering brush (flat ferrule) has hairs of equal length. By using brushes without points, you can create lines of even thickness with sharp, square ends. Study the practice strokes. They show the difference between normal application and "well loaded" brush techniques.

This alphabet illustrates the number of strokes the artist used for each letter, the order in which he made them, and the direction he used. Many letters are constructed with more strokes than you might have thought necessary. For instance, each circular letter has been done with at least two strokes. This gives the artist better control. He can pull his brush to him rather than pushing it away.

Brush Alphabets

Brush lettering styles are very similar to those you can create with pen and ink. In fact, with the exception of some "fine line" lettering styles, you will be able to do most pen alphabets with a brush. The big advantage of doing pen alphabets with brushes is that you can make the letters much larger.

Don't hesitate to try all of the styles you find in the pen or the brush section. Study the alphabets and decide why they are called Roman, Gothic or Script. Remember that Roman letters have varying line widths, Gothic letters have even lines and Script looks like "handwriting". After you've experimented with the lettering shown, create some combinations of your own. There are hundreds of lettering styles – look for them in newspapers and magazines. Notice that many artists use two or three different lettering styles, in upper and lower case, on their posters for interest and variety.

All of the alphabets on this page are suitable for lettering with a brush. These styles illustrate the variety of line that an artist can get with his brushes. All of the alphabets are used by printers. They have been made into type, but were originally created by artists with brushes. The loose, decorative brush lettering takes time to "master", but the results are well worth the effort.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUV
WXYZ 0123456789
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

This "balloon" lettering is drawn at a slight slant and has a modern appearance that could easily be used for eye-catching posters and displays. It is a modern Gothic style, done with a well loaded, round ferrule lettering brush. The line width does not vary, and the alphabet is purposely kept simple so it can be read easily.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Brush lettering like this is normally done with a flat lettering brush. Notice the thick and thin lines, and the way the artist has allowed some of the strokes to overlap for interest and spontaneity. These letters have a more dignified quality than the Gothic letters above. This dignity is due to the more "square" and crisp lines.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRST
UVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

This interesting Script is done with a round ferrule brush. It is done on a slant and has an interesting variety of line thicknesses. To do this lettering the artist works rapidly and creates the various thicknesses by using different amounts of pressure on his brush. Brush script like this is extremely popular for accents on posters.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRST
UVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789

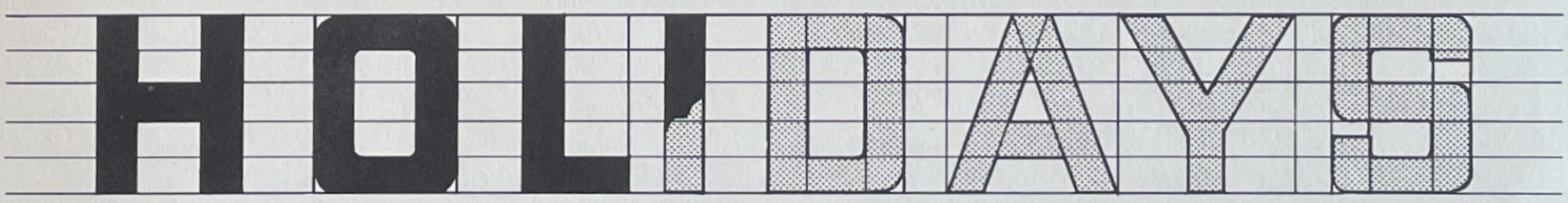
This Script can be done with a brush. Like many of the lettering samples on this page, it could also be done with a C-series pen. Notice the varying line widths that give this alphabet interest and character.

Spacing Your Letters

The minute you begin to put individual letters together to form words, you'll recognize the need for good spacing. Spacing your letters will be just as important as doing neat, clear lettering. For, no matter how well you construct the letters, if you place them too close together (or too far apart) the words will be difficult to read.

Many beginners make the mistake of ruling equal spaces between all letters. This is called mechanical spacing and is not very effective because letters are different in size and shape. As you space letters, you should use your optical (visual) judgment. In order to make letters appear evenly spaced, you will have to move open letters closer together and closed letters farther apart. The expert letterer tries to keep the air spaces between the letters equal. You may have to "crowd" letters like T, C and O because there is so much air space in each one.

Mechanical spacing (ruling even distances between all letters) will not make your lettering appear well balanced or properly spaced. Notice how there seems to be more space between the C and the T than there is between the H and the N. Even though there are equal distances between the letters, and even though the letters are the same size, actually there is more *air space* between the C and the T. So, the artist would push the C and the T closer together. By doing this he would make the air space between them approximately the same as that between the H and the N. Be sure to have all of your letters sketched in place with a pencil so you can make corrections in spacing as well as in basic construction before inking or painting them in.

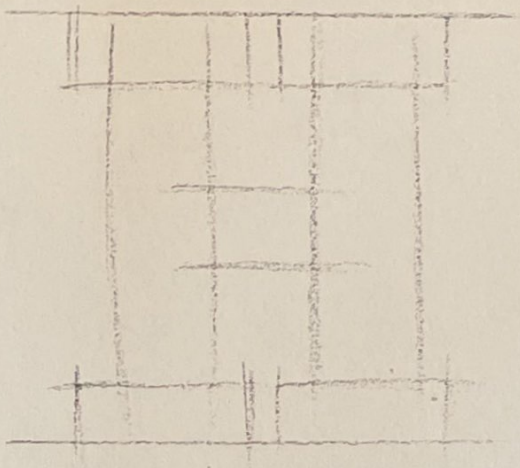


Construction and Optical Spacing

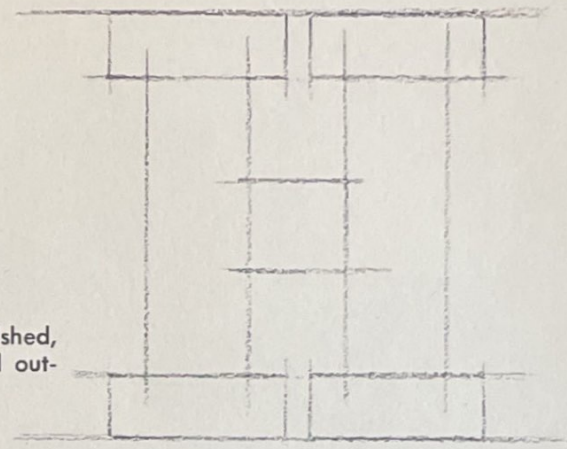
The artist has used six guide lines for this word. The top and bottom spaces were used to determine the line width of each letter. This same width was used for the diagonal and vertical lines. Study and practice the "grid" method of constructing.

This word illustrates the need for optical spacing. The space between the H and the O is the same as the space between the O and the L because the H and the left side of the L have a vertical line construction. But the I is placed closer to the L because the L is "open" on the right side. The D is spaced the same distance from the I as the H was from the O. But the A is moved closer to the D because the diagonal line of the A creates open space when it is near the D. The upper left tip of the Y is actually on a line with the lower right tip of the A. The S is also moved close to the Y because the two letters have quite a bit of open space. Study the spacing and see how the artist has moved some letters closer together than others to create equal air space between letters.

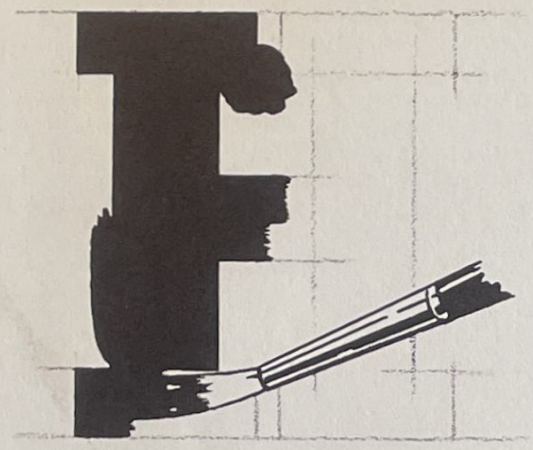
Constructing and Correcting Letters



The first step in constructing this type of letter involves "roughing in" the basic shape. The artist followed the guide lines, but didn't worry about getting perfectly straight lines in his letter.

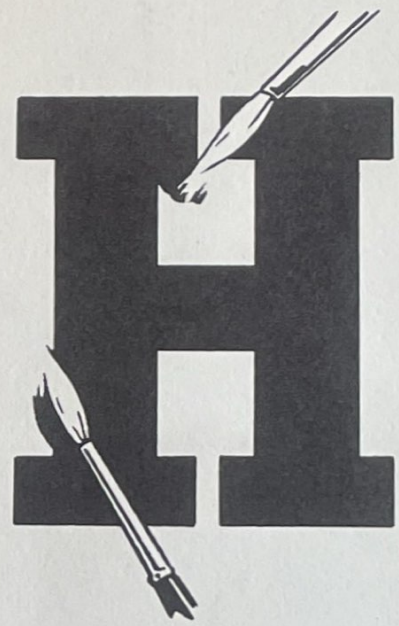


After the basic proportions were established, the artist carefully ruled a tight pencil outline of the letter.



In the third step the outline was filled in with ink. Notice the two mistakes. One was caused by a drop of ink and the other was the result of a misplaced brush stroke.

By using opaque white paint (tempera) the artist removed his mistakes. The retouch white is not too effective for posters, but it works well for material that is to be reproduced. Mistakes on outdoor signs (oil base, bulletin paints) can be corrected by "erasing" them with a rag and turpentine. The turpentine should be allowed to dry, and then the letter can be redone.



Checking up on Yourself

Let's go over some of the main points of the "Ink Extras". It will give you a chance to check up on yourself to see how well you have covered the material.

Do You Remember That:

1. Scratchboard is one of the oldest "special" ink techniques.
2. The felt tip pen is useful for sketching as well as for finished art and posters.
3. Many of the pen alphabets can also be done with brushes.
4. Artists usually use tempera paint for brush work on posters, and ink for brush lettering that is to be reproduced.
5. The three basic categories of lettering are: Roman, Gothic and Script.

Did You:

1. Try any of the lettering styles with your water color brushes?
2. Get a lettering brush to experiment with?
3. Study the differences between Roman, Gothic and Script lettering styles?
4. Try using optical spacing for a word that was not illustrated in the text?